

# The Byzantine Aristocracy /// IX to XIII Centuries

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edited by  
Michael Angold

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# ABBREVIATIONS

|                   |                                                                                                           |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>AASS</u>       | <u>Acta Sancta Bollandiana</u>                                                                            |
| <u>AB</u>         | <u>Acta Bollandiana</u>                                                                                   |
| <u>AHR</u>        | <u>American Historical Review</u>                                                                         |
| <u>B</u>          | <u>Byzantion</u>                                                                                          |
| <u>BMGS</u>       | <u>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</u>                                                                 |
| <u>BS</u>         | <u>Byzantinoslavica</u>                                                                                   |
| <u>BZ</u>         | <u>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</u>                                                                          |
| <u>CIG</u>        | <u>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</u>                                                                     |
| <u>DOP</u>        | <u>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</u>                                                                              |
| <u>JÖB</u>        | <u>Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik</u>                                                        |
| <u>JRS</u>        | <u>Journal of Roman Studies</u>                                                                           |
| <u>MGH</u>        | <u>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</u>                                                                      |
| Migne, <u>PG</u>  | J.P. Migne, <u>Patrologiae cursus completus. Series graeco-latina</u> (Paris, 1857-66)                    |
| MM                | F. Miklosich and J. Muller, <u>Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana</u> (Vienna, 1860-90) |
| <u>OC</u>         | <u>Orientalia Christiana</u>                                                                              |
| <u>REB</u>        | <u>Revue des études byzantines</u>                                                                        |
| <u>TM</u>         | <u>Travaux et Mémoires</u>                                                                                |
| <u>VV</u>         | <u>Vizantijskij Vremmenik</u>                                                                             |
| Zepos, <u>Ius</u> | J. and P. Zepos, <u>Ius graecoromanum</u> (Athens, 1931)                                                  |
| <u>ZRVI</u>       | <u>Zbornik Radova Vizantoloshkog Instituta</u>                                                            |

Editions of Histories and Chronicles included in the Bonn Corpus are cited by the name of the author, followed by Bonn in brackets. Other editions of Histories and Chronicles have the title given in full, but are then cited by the name of the author.



## A NOTE ON THE TRANSLITERATION OF GREEK NAMES, TITLES AND TERMS

This is always a headache. Neither of the systems generally used is wholly satisfactory, when it comes to works on Byzantium. If Latin forms are used, they leave the impression that Byzantine Studies belong to the World of Classical Scholarship, which is not the case. The perils of employing Greek forms consistently are apparent from a glance at Arnold Toynbee's Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His World. In all other respects a fine work! Somehow a balance has to be struck between Latin and Greek forms. There are some names, which in their Latin form have become domiciled in the English language. It would, for instance, be perverse to change Anna Comnena's surname to Komnênê. So in this, and in similar cases, where long usage prevails, I have preferred the Latin form. But there are many hard cases, which were decided in the end by editorial whim: Cantacuzenus and not Kantakouzenos, but Andronikos and not Andronicus. I have where possible used kh, and not ch, for the Greek letter Χ. It seems to me that ch represents a babble of sounds and that kh provides a much better guide to the pronunciation of the Greek letter. Even here I have not been consistent. In the face of long usage I have preferred, for example, Choniates to Khoniates and archon to arkhon.

Michael Angold

## INTRODUCTION

Michael Angold

The notion of aristocracy has been a godsend to modern historians: it is so admirably imprecise. It literally means the rule of the best, but it leaves in doubt who are the best-fitted to rule; the assumption being that those who have power are best-fitted to exercise it. Aristocracy has therefore come to mean little more than a ruling class, but, because power so often descends within a family from one generation to the next, the word is usually given hereditary overtones. Aristocracy and nobility are therefore often taken to be no more than different sides of the same coin. The former deals in the exercise of power, the latter in the qualities and the qualifications needed. A shift in the meaning of nobility will alter the character of aristocracy, and vice versa.

The Byzantines agonized over the nature of nobility. They were broadly agreed that its essence was a series of moral and spiritual qualities that fitted a man for office or command, but did these qualities spring from high birth or were they acquired by merit alone? It was a debate that reflected the changing character of the Byzantine aristocracy. Byzantine authors make little use of the term aristocracy or, for that matter, aristocrat. There was an archaic ring to them, which ill-accommodated with a monarchy, such as that of Byzantium. Michael Attaleiates, the eleventh-century historian, is one of the few Byzantine writers to employ the term aristocrat. He recalled his humble provincial origins in a short autobiographical sketch. Thanks to a good education - and considerable ability, which he modestly refrains from mentioning - he was to "become a member of the senate and to be numbered among the best of councillors or aristocrats as they were called of old".<sup>1</sup> He clearly equated being an aristocrat, not with high birth, but with a position of trust in imperial service. It comes close to modern notions of meritocracy.

By way of an introduction I should like to trace, in the wake of Alexander Kazhdan, that momentous change which saw a meritocracy give way to a hereditary aristocracy at the heart of Byzantine government. For much of its history Constantinople offered a career open to talents. Birth counted for something, but education and ability for much more in the struggle for preferment. The ideal was loyal service to the emperor, as the embodiment of the state; rewards came in the forms of state pensions and rank at court. The insignia (brabeia) of rank were the true patents of nobility. They were entirely in the emperor's gift. From the ninth century this meritocracy had to contend with an increasing emphasis upon the importance of family ties. Evelyn Patlagean shows how this was reflected in the growing use of surnames and a greater awareness of family relationships, in contrast to the situation prevailing before the ninth

century. By the end of the century it was becoming more and more difficult to square the meritocratic ideal with the growth of family interest. The upshot was a debate over the nature of nobility, which is caught by the Emperor Leo VI (886-912) in his Military Handbook. He was loath to accept that distinguished birth was an absolute qualification for high command. He preferred "to consider the nobility of men, not according to their birth, but according to their deeds".<sup>2</sup> He admitted that those of distinguished ancestry might expect to be given high command, but it depended upon their ability, not to mention their willingness to obey orders. The emperor provided a succinct definition of true nobility: "to be ready at a crucial moment to obey orders".<sup>3</sup> He was trying to uphold the ideal of merit and service as the essence of nobility in the face of the conviction that it depended on high birth.

Leo VI was the first emperor who tried to come to terms with the growing power of the great Anatolian families, such as the Doukas, the Argyros, the Phokas, the Skleros, and the Maleinos. The fortunes of these families can be traced no further back than the middle of the ninth century. Their founders, almost without exception, held important commands in the armies of the Anatolian themes. The Argyros family went back to a turmarch by the name of Leo. We are told that he was the first to take the surname Argyros (literally "shining"), "whether because of the cleanliness and purity of his body or because of the beauty and nobility of his features or because of some other sign of his breeding and manhood, for there was not to be found in the reign of the Emperor Michael [III (842-867)] another soldier to compare with him. Many times did he and his retainers encounter the Saracens of Tephrike and leave them defeated, undone, and ruined; and his name was renowned and caused them to fear and tremble".<sup>4</sup> He also founded the monastery of St. Elizabeth in the theme of Kharsianon, which became a family shrine and burial-place. It is an early instance of the role that monasteries had as a focus of family solidarity.

The exploits of Leo Argyros provide a clue to the emergence of these great families along the eastern frontier of the Byzantine Empire from the middle of the ninth century. The balance of power along the border shifted decisively in favour of the Byzantines. The beneficiaries were successful warband leaders, such as Leo Argyros. The relative security that their military prowess brought allowed them to build up estates and to acquire great flocks and herds. They dominated the local military organization, which was provided by the theme system. This was seen as a direct challenge to the authority of the state. For a century there was to be almost continuous friction between the great families of Anatolia and the central government in Constantinople. For a short while they even secured control of the imperial office, when, first, Nicephorus Phokas (963-969) and, then, John Tzimiskes (969-976) became emperor. They ruled, in theory, as guardians of the legitimate Emperor Basil II, who was still a minor. It was an arrangement which could not outlast his coming of age.

Basil II's accession to power in 976 was the signal for a series of rebellions by the magnates of Anatolia. The most serious came in 987, when the heads of the two most powerful families, the Skleros and the Phokas, combined against him. They had the armies of the

East at their back. At his wits' end the emperor turned to the ruler of Kiev for help. Thanks to the timely despatch of a corps of Varangians from Kiev Basil was able to defeat the armies of the East in 989. The power of the Anatolian families was for the time being broken.

By any standards, these families constituted a hereditary aristocracy, but their power base was in the provinces. Only fitfully did they dominate the workings of central government. Our concern in this volume is not so much with provincial ascendancies as with that hereditary aristocracy which came to control the imperial court and government from the mid-eleventh century onwards. It is a chapter of Byzantine history, which ironically begins with the defeat of the Anatolian families in 989.

As Professor Kazhdan has shown in his fundamental work on the Byzantine ruling classes in the eleventh and twelfth centuries,<sup>5</sup> the reign of Basil II was a watershed in the history of the Byzantine aristocracy. The great families sought to recoup their losses by cooperating with the imperial government. Much more than in the past, they gravitated to Constantinople. In this they seem to have been actively encouraged by Basil II. It was easier to keep an eye on them. They would maintain special residences in Constantinople - the palace of Botaneiates is just one example, only notable because a detailed description - translated at the end of this volume - has survived. The Botaneiates were an offshoot of the Phokas family. They provided Byzantium with one of its least distinguished emperors: Nicephorus Botaneiates (1078-1081). His father Michael was one of Basil II's most trusted commanders, despite the Phokas connection. The emperor even saw fit to promote him to the office of prefect of Constantinople - a post rarely given to a soldier. The future Emperor Romanos Argyros (1028-1034) was another member of an old Anatolian family, who was raised by Basil II to this position. These appointments reflected the way that these families were beginning to make Constantinople their main centre of operations, even if they retained their estates in Asia Minor.

The death of Basil II in 1025 ushered in a period, when the succession to the throne was to be in doubt. The house of Macedon, which had provided Byzantium with its emperors for a century or more, was failing. Basil II never married; and the throne was to go with the hand of his frivolous niece, Zoe. The struggle for power was very largely among those old families, who had been able to establish themselves in the capital: families, such as the Argyros, the Monomachos, the Doukas, and the Skleros. In the background were various cliques of civil servants who were determined that their place in government would not be upset by any change of regime. They continued to uphold the meritocratic ideal. Michael Psellos was the member of one such group, which latched on to the Emperor Constantine Monomachos (1042-1055). He recalled that Monomachos "did not advance office holders and imperial councillors according to birth ...., for he believed it absurd that it should be an essential law and an unchangeable rule to observe succession by family and that only somebody revered for his lineage should have access to the palace, even if his mental faculties were marred and he could do no more than breathe, not able to belch forth anything except his family's great name".<sup>6</sup> There was more than an element of wishful thinking in this;

and Psellos was quick to repent. He married an aristocratic bride, taking great pleasure in her illustrious descent, and was soon claiming that his own undistinguished family were sprung from consuls and patricians. He also took care to attach himself to the rising star of the Doukas family and was instrumental in bringing Constantine Doukas to the throne in 1059.

Michael Psellos's change of heart, his willingness to abandon the meritocratic ideal, which had served men of his sort so well, was symptomatic of the triumph of a hereditary aristocracy. The new Emperor Constantine Doukas was at pains to present himself as a scion of the great house of Doukas, which had been so prominent at the turn of the ninth century, even if it is now impossible to establish such a connection. He brought to the exercise of imperial authority a sense of family solidarity, notably absent in earlier periods of Byzantine history. He associated with him in government his brother, the Caesar John Doukas, who held the family together after Constantine's death. The Caesar, now an old man, chose Alexius Comnenus, the most promising young aristocrat at the imperial court, as the guardian of his family's interests and married him to his granddaughter Eirene. His backing ensured the success of the coup which brought Alexius to the throne in April 1081.

The accession of Alexius Comnenus was seen at the time as a triumph for a group of aristocratic families united by ties of blood and marriage. They almost all had their roots in Anatolia, but had gravitated over the course of the eleventh century to Constantinople - a process which the Turkish conquest of large tracts of Anatolia had only intensified. The families who came to power with the Doukas and the Comneni were to constitute the aristocracy par excellence. Their status was enshrined in the reform of court titles, which Alexius Comnenus undertook as one of his first measures as emperor. For the first time a dynastic element was introduced into the ordering of the court hierarchy. Alexius created a special order reserved for his relatives by blood and marriage - the order of sebastoi. (Sebastos was originally an imperial epithet, equivalent to the Latin Augustus). This new order had its own special hierarchy ranging from the sebastokrator, at the top, which was reserved for the emperor's eldest brother, down to simple sebastos. The imperial family in its widest sense was now imposed, at least honorifically, as an aristocracy at the top of Byzantine society. Their position was still further strengthened by the grant of state rights and revenues, which were known as pronoiai. Well might the chronicler Zonaras complain that Alexius ruled the Empire as the head of an aristocratic connection.

The Comneni were a military aristocracy. They monopolized command and provincial governorships. Below them came the bureaucracy, which formed an order within the system of ranks introduced by the Comneni. Hereditary notions began to seep in, largely because old families, not included in the charmed Doukas-Comnenian circle, found a refuge in the civil service. In the provinces local families were coming to dominate the towns, which, at least, in the Greek lands were increasing in importance. This three-fold division of the upper ranks of Byzantine society in the early twelfth century is a shade schematic, but broadly accurate. It provided the Byzantine Empire with the stability to recover from the disasters of the late eleventh

century.

From the middle of the twelfth century pressures were building up which undermined the cohesion of Byzantine society. Professor Kazhdan has shown that until well into the reign of Manuel I Comnenus (1143-1180) the Comneni continued to monopolize high office and rank. Thereafter they began to give way to other families, which came for the most part from the fringes of the Comnenian circle. A series of independent aristocratic families were beginning to emerge as a political force. They contributed to the near anarchy, which followed the death of the Emperor Manuel in 1180, and culminated in the fall of Constantinople to the fourth crusade in 1204. The power of these families was amply demonstrated in 1195, when the heads of the Palaiologos, the Raoul, the Petraliphas, the Branas, and the Cantacuzenus families combined to overthrow the Emperor Isaac II Angelos (1185-1195). They replaced him with his brother Alexius, who, it was hoped, might be more amenable to their wishes. The backgrounds of these families are instructive. The Palaiologoi were an old family, already prominent at the end of the eleventh century, when George Palaiologos helped his brother-in-law Alexius Comnenus to seize the throne of Constantinople. The family belonged to the charmed circle of the Comneni and provided high ranking office holders and dignitaries throughout the twelfth century, but it also retained a strong sense of family identity.<sup>8</sup> The Raoul and Petraliphas families could trace their origins back to Norman adventurers, who took service with the Emperor Alexius Comnenus, but they then faded into obscurity. The Petraliphas became small landowners around Didymoteichos in Thrace. The prowess displayed by two members of the family in the armies of Manuel Comnenus brought them to the attention of the emperor. The family's rise to prominence can best be explained by the favour shown by the Emperor Manuel. Much the same pattern is to be seen with the Cantacuzenus family, though they were of Byzantine origin. The earliest known Cantacuzenus was one of Alexius Comnenus's most skilful commanders, but it is only with the reign of Manuel Comnenus that the continuous history of the family can be said to have begun. The Branas family is rather different. Members of the family were established at Adrianople at the turn of the tenth century, but they sought to avoid entanglements at court. Their power rested on their control of Adrianople, within easy striking distance of Constantinople.

These five families along with a few others would provide the nucleus of the Byzantine aristocracy until at least the middle of the fourteenth century. Both the Palaiologoi and the Cantacuzeni would provide Byzantium with imperial dynasties. The fall of Constantinople to the Latins in 1204 seems hardly to have damaged their fortunes. If anything, exile enhanced their position, because they were able to build up their landed wealth in the provinces, where they took refuge. The experience of exile crystallized changes which had been occurring before 1204. The aristocracy was no longer exclusively identified with the imperial family, but consisted of a series of great families. They might continue to set great store by their imperial ancestry, adding to their own names those of the imperial houses of Comnenus, Angelos, Laskaris, Palaiologos, and even Cantacuzenus, as badges of nobility, but this only emphasized that the imperial dynasty was but one aristocratic family among many, even if few dared to say this openly.<sup>9</sup> They were the families of 'golden

lineage'. Though Byzantium never had anything as formal as Venice's Libro d'Oro, the aristocracy was limited to an exclusive circle of families, rather more than a dozen in number. It gave rise to the idea preserved in the Greek Chronicle of the Morea of the twelve noble houses of Constantinople.<sup>10</sup> There was some movement in and out of this group, which remained a tightly-knit body, bound by ties of marriage. They resented any attempts made by different emperors to give away their daughters to commoners, for this endangered their exclusivity. More to the point, it might mean that their wealth and lands would pass into the hands of outsiders.

The Byzantine aristocracy may have been able to survive the fall of Constantinople to the Latins with their fortunes more or less intact, but they were the victims of that erosion of power, which began in earnest at the turn of the thirteenth century. The Byzantine aristocracy disintegrated along with the Empire. There is no concerted treatment in this volume of this final phase in the history of the Byzantine aristocracy. It is, however, the subject of a study by Angeliki Laiou.<sup>11</sup> Disintegration took various forms. In the aftermath of the fall of Constantinople to the Latins successor states appeared in Trebizond, in western Asia Minor, and in the Greek lands. They were never properly reintegrated in the restored Byzantine Empire - not even ironically the lands which had formed the Empire of Nicaea. It was the start of the creation of imperial courts in the provinces, each with its own aristocracy. By the mid-fourteenth century virtually all the cities of Byzantium of any size had their own petty imperial courts, as the Empire split up into a series of apanages for the princes of the ruling houses. By the end of the century neither at Constantinople nor in these provincial courts were the old families much in evidence. The political collapse of the Empire in the aftermath of the civil wars of the mid-fourteenth century destroyed the foundations of their power. The families that succeeded were those who could master the flux of those years. They were often adventurers, such as the three brothers who seized the town of Kavalla and the island of Thasos. One of them gave a vivid account of their origins in a letter to the doge of Venice: "all our clan is from the East and we are of noble birth. We three left home and came here [i.e. to Kavalla]. With God's grace and with our swords we have taken some castles from the pagan Turks and some from the Serbs."<sup>12</sup> The Emperor John V Palaiologos (1341-1391) bowed before a fait accompli, confirmed them in their conquests and raised them to positions of rank. They were the leaders of a warband. The surviving brother Alexius paid special attention in his will to the well-being of his retainers: his *paidia*, who, he gratefully remembered, had "often in times of danger offered their souls on his behalf."<sup>13</sup> The history of the Byzantine aristocracy has come full circle.

The old families sought refuge where they could. Some went to Serbia, others to Cyprus and Italy. In 1446 Ciriaco of Ancona, the 'father of epigraphers', found George Cantacuzenus in his country-house at Kalavryta, in the mountains behind Patras. He was taking his ease in his marvellous library, for all the world like some Roman senator. But even he judged it prudent to depart for Serbia with its greater safety and wealth.

We have traced the history of the Byzantine aristocracy from its

origins along the eastern frontier in the ninth century to its disintegration in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. We have followed a succession of transformations from border warriors to court aristocracy, from imperial clan to aristocratic houses, from the provinces to Constantinople and from Constantinople back to the provinces. It is not the aim of the studies collected in this volume to provide a comprehensive treatment of all aspects and episodes of this history. They concentrate instead on the period that runs from the eleventh to the early fourteenth century: which might be described as the hey-day of the Byzantine aristocracy. The focus is even narrower than this might suggest. The emphasis is very much on the way the Byzantine aristocracy chose to present and express themselves, whether in their piety or in their patronage of the arts, letters and monasteries, or even in the bewildering array of surnames they chose to adopt. This will, I hope, give a certain coherence to the volume, but it means that many aspects of the history of the Byzantine aristocracy have had to be neglected. The most obvious omission is that there is nothing on the sources of aristocratic power and wealth. It may be that for the moment there is not much that can usefully be done in this direction. There is nothing on the political connections of the Byzantine aristocracy. This is likely to be a more fruitful field, as Gunther Weiss has shown in his book on John Cantacuzenus.<sup>14</sup> To compensate for these deficiencies there is a pioneering study by Paul Magdalino on the Byzantine aristocratic *oikos* or household, which not only sheds new light on the character of the aristocratic family at Byzantium, but also relates it to the Byzantine palace and the aristocratic monastery. These, along with the imperial court, were the focus of aristocratic life in Byzantium and they receive special treatment.

But what of the character of the Byzantine aristocracy? What do the studies collected in this volume add to our understanding of the Byzantine aristocracy? Quite a lot, simply because it is a problem that has attracted little attention and fewer answers. Cavafy has given as good an answer as anybody in his poem, 'A Byzantine archon, in exile, writing verses', which has the exile, a victim of Alexius Comnenus's Empress Eirene Doukaina, finding solace in ancient myth and the composition of the most correct iambs (*iambous orthotous*). This is the old ideal of the cultivated gentleman with a good classical education. It had been the badge of those meritocrats who dominated central government at Constantinople until the eleventh century. It was certainly the ideal, as Paul Magdalino shows in a brilliant article on Byzantine snobbery, that was wished upon the aristocracy by the *literati* they patronized. So much that was irreducibly and ineradicably Byzantine continued to inform the character of the Byzantine aristocracy: the piety, the conformism, the need to show off.

One hardly needs to be reminded too often of Professor Lemerle's adage: "to represent Byzantium as unchanging over eleven centuries would be to fall into the trap that it has itself prepared". Professor Kazhdan is able to expose the changes that were occurring beneath the surface. It is not that a new image of the aristocracy is created, but that the imperial ideal is reshaped in the image of the aristocracy, which came to power with Alexius Comnenus. Before the eleventh century it is the traditional pacific virtues cultivated by the bureaucracy which are emphasized in portraits of the emperor, but

these give way to the martial virtues of a military aristocracy. The Emperor Manuel Comnenus even appropriated the image of Digenes Akrites - the aristocratic ideal par excellence, as J.B. Bury long ago observed.<sup>15</sup> It deprived the Byzantine aristocracy of the chance it had to evolve an image separate from the imperial ideal. They had to be content to see themselves mirrored in the emperor. They shared in his virtues, even if they were their own. They gazed enviously at the chivalric ideal of the West, which placed the knight and not the ruler at the centre of society. The Byzantines failed to develop any clear concept of knighthood - of the warrior and his way of life receiving the blessing of the church, for much the same reason that they never accepted the idea of Holy War.

Without any independent ideal the character of the Byzantine aristocracy was curiously contradictory. They were slaves of the emperor, but retained a strong sense of family independence. They were eager to conform to the standards of the court, but flaunted their individualism. They were public figures who valued their privacy above all, shutting themselves away behind the high walls of their palaces. These were contradictions at the heart of Byzantine society, characterized by Professor Kazhdan recently as 'individualism without freedom'.<sup>16</sup> But in the case of the aristocracy it was also to do with their double character: fused with the imperial ideal and family, but by virtue of their aristocratic descent increasingly independent, once the Comneni lost their cohesion. This distinction is brought out in a letter written in 1156 by a bishop of Ephesus to a member of the Kontostephanos family. He begged him to stop interfering in the affairs of a suffragan bishopric, "for he was not able to bear the thought that his imperial blood should thus be defiled, nor that the name of the Kontostephanos renowned for justice and piety should be besmirched through tolerating such practices".<sup>17</sup> The life of the aristocracy was divided between the imperial court, where they joined in the ceremonial that solemnized imperial authority, and their palaces and monasteries, where the family was celebrated. This private domain was one that was as often as not dominated by the womenfolk. Anna Dalassena was the real architect of the fortunes of the Comneni - just one of a series of formidable aristocratic ladies, who are the subject of the opening study by Sir Steven Runciman. In many ways it was the women, who held together the aristocratic family in Byzantium and guided its destinies. This may explain why, in comparison to other ancient and medieval societies, Byzantium accorded so prominent a role to its women.

This volume had its origins in the Sixteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, which was held in Edinburgh 2-4 April 1982. It did not prove possible to collect together all the papers that were given there. I have tried to give greater coherence to the volume by adding papers that were not given at the Symposium. My thanks go in particular to Vera von Falkenhausen for a splendid paper on the aristocracy of Byzantine Italy; to Margaret Mullett for her pioneering study of Comnenian literary patronage, which complements so well Robin Cormack's piece on the patronage of the arts; and, finally, to Paul Magdalino for providing his study on the Byzantine aristocratic oikos.

#### NOTES

1. P. Gautier, 'La diataxis de Michel Attaliatè', Revue des Etudes Byzantines, 39(1981), p.21.
2. J.P. Migne, Patrologiae cursus completus: series graeco-latina (Paris, 1857-66), 107, c.688.
3. Ibid., c.700.
4. Theophanes Continuatus (Bonn), p.374, ll.3-19; John Scylitzes, Synopsis Historiarum, ed. J. Thurn (Berlin/New York, 1973), p.189, ll.28-36.
5. A.P. Kazhdan, Sotsial'nyj sostav gosподstvujushchego klassa Vizantii (XI-XII vv) (Moscow, 1974), pp.255-58.
6. K.N. Sathas, Mesaiônîkê Bibliothêkê (Venice/Paris, 1872-94), IV, pp.430-1.
7. Zonaras (Bonn), III, p.766.
8. Cf. Timarion, ed. R. Romano (Naples, 1974), pp.56-7; Imperatoris Michaeli Palaeologi de Vita sua, ed. H. Grégoire in Byzantion, 29-30 (1959-60), pp.449-51.
9. George Mouzalon criticized the exercise of imperial authority along these lines and paid for it with this life in September 1258: see M.J. Angold, A Byzantine Government in Exile (Oxford, 1975), pp.80-93.
10. To Khronikon tou Moreôs, ed. J. Schmitt (London, 1904), v. 8710, p.564.
11. A.E. Laiou, 'The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Palaeologan period: a study of arrested development', Viator, 4(1973), pp.131-51.
12. G.M. Thomas, Diplomatarium Veneto-Levantinum, II (Venice, 1899) pp.164-5.
13. Actes de Pantocrator, ed. L. Petit in Vizantijskij Vremennik, 10(1903), App. pp.12-13.
14. G. Weiss, Joannes Kantakuzenos - Aristokrat, Staatsmann, Kaiser und Monch - in der Gesellschaftsentwicklung von Byzanz im 14. Jahrhundert (Wiesbaden, 1969), pp.23-53.
15. J.B. Bury, Romances of Chivalry on Greek Soil (Oxford, 1911).
16. A. Kazhdan (with G. Constable), People and Power in Byzantium (Washington, D.C., 1982), p.34.
17. Georges et Démétrios Tornikès, Lettres et Discours, ed. J. Darrouzes (Paris, 1970), pp.173-4.



## CHAPTER 1 - WOMEN IN BYZANTINE ARISTOCRATIC SOCIETY

Sir Steven Runciman

It is a platitude to say that Byzantine civilization is made up of three elements, the Greek, the Roman and the Judaeo-Christian. If that were the whole truth, it would have provided a poor prospect for Byzantine womanhood. Greek civilization reached its height, we are always told, in Athens in the 5th century B.C.. Yet nowhere else did women have so dim a time, unless they were of ill repute. It has always seemed to me monstrous of Pericles, having secured for himself the pleasant company of Aspasia, to have condemned all other women to lives of cheerless hard work. We are told to admire Republican Rome; but the ideal woman there was someone like that grim complacent mother of the Gracchi, who announced that her jewels were her two tiresome sons. Amongst the Jews women were allowed little say, except for rare prophetesses, such as Miriam or Deborah; and St. Paul made it clear that he did not intend women to do much better under the new Dispensation. How was it, then, that Byzantine women did so much better than their ancestresses?

The answer, I think, comes largely from the East. In early Western Europe there were a few femmes formidables, some fierce indomitable ladies in the old Sagas, a legendary queen such as Maeve of Connaught, or, more historically, Queen Boudicca. But it is in the East, Near and Far, that we first find great women rulers, the semi-mythical Semiramis, the Chinese Empress Wu, of whom you were not allowed to say: 'the Empress is as beautiful as the sun'. You had to say: 'the sun is as beautiful as the Empress'; Hatshepsut of Egypt, one of the greatest of the Pharaohs; Phoenician ladies such as Dido, Queen of Carthage, ruined by falling love with that prig Aeneas, or her cousin, Queen Jezebel, who made the mistake of marrying into a prophet-ridden country. Even in Persia, the country which pioneered harems guarded by eunuchs, Queen Atossa, daughter of Cyrus, wife of Darius and mother of Xerxes, was the dominant political figure throughout her life. In Classical Greece the only eminent woman of action was a vassal of the Persians, Artemisia, Queen of Halicarnassus, the one naval commander on the Persian side to emerge with credit from the battle of Salamis. She wore a false beard when going into battle.

The emergence of formidable ladies - or, shall we call it 'the monstrous regiment of women'? - begins in the Classical world with the Hellenistic age, with the succession kingdoms, and especially in Ptolemaic Egypt: though Macedonia and Epiros seem to have bred women well fitted for the role. In Rome it begins rather suddenly in the family circle of the Caesars; and I suspect that it reflects the invasion of more oriental ideas. Livia and her kinswomen probably owed far more to the influence of Cleopatra than they would have

liked to admit.

After the period of Twelve Caesars we hear little of great women, perhaps because there was not another Tacitus to tell us of them, till the Christian era, except for the Syrian-born Empresses of the house of Heliogabalus, - and except for that eminent enemy of Rome, Zenobia of Palmyra. It is only after the triumph of Christianity that, in spite of St. Paul, women appear again to play a part in politics.

Christianity owed its triumph largely to the fact that it appealed to women, just as Mithraism failed because it allowed women only a minimal part in its life. The good Christian woman was, it is true, supposed to be modest and self-effacing, restricting her public duties to works of charity. But Christianity stressed the importance of monogamy and opposed easy divorce. It believed in family life, with the wife and the mother playing leading roles. It is true that, unlike some other religions, it did not permit priestesses. But there were deaconesses, though with the development of the hierarchy their part began to fade. Women could enter monastic life, just as men could. There had been and were still to be eminent women saints; and above all the growing cult of the Mother of God gave a special status to womanhood.

The lot of women among the poor has always been much the same the whole world over. The peasant woman, till recently, at least, worked beside her husband in the fields - or sometimes did all the work, while he hunted or poached or went off with the army. The small shop-keeper's wife has always helped in the shop. When the husband goes out to work the woman runs the house and brings up the children according to the family resources. It is only when we come to the wealthier classes, to houses with servants and with money to spare, that civilizations differ in the role of women. In Muslim countries such women were restricted to the harem; and though they might exercise considerable power from behind the veil, over dutiful sons or besotted husbands, their lives were inevitably limited. In the earlier Christian west, women were tough and crude, often administering the family estates when the men were away fighting. In Tibet, where women are rare, a rich lady used to indulge in polyandry, a practice which gave her a wide-spread influence.

Byzantium had its own style. The women of the upper classes did not give up the freedom that they had enjoyed in Roman Imperial times - a freedom denounced by Roman moralists, who were quite as stern as St. Paul. But the Roman ladies' freedom was without any legal sanction. They were subject to the patria potestas and all that it implied. They were easily divorced and their rights over dowries were ill-defined. Byzantine legislation was to tidy that up. But perhaps the main sanction for women's position came through their participation in the ceremonies of the Court. These ceremonies were mainly copied from the Persians; but women did not appear at the Persian Court. In Rome, however, since the days of Livia, the wife of Augustus, a series of Imperial ladies had borne the title of Augusta. When the Emperor, the Imperator Augustus, had his position authorized by a coronation, it began to be felt that his female partner should enjoy the same authorization. The first lady to be crowned Augusta was Eudoxia, the wife of Arcadius, in 400 A.D., -

many years after her marriage - she had already borne three daughters to the Emperor. Both the Emperor's and the Empress's coronations were at first secular affairs. But from 457 onwards, the Emperor was crowned by the Patriarch, acting at first as the senior official of state, but soon, by insisting on the perfect orthodoxy of the Emperor, turning it into a religious ceremony. The Empress, however, continued to be crowned by the Emperor, as was any junior co-Emperor that was appointed. But the Patriarch attended the ceremony and gave it a religious sanction. This sanction gave the Empress a constitutional position unique in the history of nations. The succession was ordinarily fixed by the custom of the Emperor co-opting a junior Emperor, usually his son, so that his own death did not cause a vacancy in the Empire. But if he died without a junior emperor, thus leaving a vacancy, the Empress - the senior Empress, if there were more than one living - then became the repository of Imperial power; and it was for her to nominate the next Emperor: whom usually she then married, were he available. When Theodosius II died without an heir, the Augusta Pulcheria nominated and married Marcian, but in name only; she had sworn a vow of virginity. On Zeno's death his widow Ariadne, when she appeared before the people in the Hippodrome, was told that it was her duty to nominate an Emperor. In the next century when Justin II became incurably mad, the Empress Sophia nominated Tiberius to be regent and subsequently Emperor.

At that time it was considered inconceivable that the Empress would not at once nominate an Emperor. But when at the end of the eighth century Eirene, having eliminated her son, retained the Imperial power for herself, she was not really acting unconstitutionally: though, as Bury suggests, it might not have been so easy for her had the Byzantines retained the old Latin title for Emperor, Imperator, 'commander-in-chief'.<sup>2</sup> It is also worth noting that Eirene's assumption of the regency for her young son was facilitated by the legislation of Leo the Isaurian, which modified the patria potestas<sup>3</sup> by giving the mother equal rights with the father over the children. A widow was thus legal guardian of her young son; and the Emperor's guardian could not well be deprived of the regency. When the Patriarch Nicholas Mystikos tried to keep Zoe Karbunopsina out of the regency, public opinion was on her side; and though her government soon fell as the result of military disasters, the usurper, Romanos Lekapenos, married his daughter to the boy-Emperor and called himself Basileopator, as though to emphasize that he had taken over his guardianship.<sup>4</sup> Subsequent mothers of child-Emperors were always considered to be entitled to the regency.<sup>5</sup>

The Augusta was not necessarily the Emperor's wife, though the wife was usually so crowned, but not always at the time of her marriage. Pulcheria was the Emperor's sister, though it is unclear whether she was officially appointed by her dying father or by her child-brother. In fact, it was the Prefect Anthemius who arranged it. Theophilos, when he had not yet had a son, appointed his eldest daughter, Thekla, probably intending her future husband to succeed him. Leo VI, between marriages, appointed his daughter Anna, because, we are told, the ceremonies of the Court could not be maintained without an Empress.<sup>6</sup>

Indeed, the Empress had a vast number of official duties to perform and a huge household to supervise. On the days when the

Emperor entertained the officials of his Court and gave them gifts according to their rank, the Empress did likewise with their wives, ceremonies which ambitious ladies, anxious to promote their husbands' careers, were assiduous in attending. The Book of Ceremonies lists her duties in the tenth century: though it is not always clear how many functions she attended along with her husband. When Constantine talks of 'the Emperors', does he mean the Imperial couple or just the Emperor and whatever co-Emperors there were at the time? I doubt if the Empress attended many of the state banquets. One has the impression from Liutprand of Cremona that women were not present at such functions in his time. But by the time of the Comneni and later, women were more in evidence.

The term 'gynaikeion' for the women's quarters in the houses of the great has sometimes led to a misconception that the ladies of Byzantium led lives of seclusion, surrounded by eunuchs. In fact there was little resemblance between the gynaikeion and the haramlik of an Ottoman great house. The Empress was in full control of her vast establishment and decided who could be admitted. Her high officials were not necessarily eunuchs, though the presence of eunuchs in the more intimate posts was a safeguard against gossip. She had her own Treasury. Large revenues were earmarked for her; and enterprising Empresses did not disdain commercial activity. Theophilos was horrified when he discovered that his wife Theodora was a successful shipowner. He confiscated her merchandise.<sup>8</sup> But other Emperors took a less snobbish attitude towards trade.

The position of the Empress's quarters in the Great Palace must have varied from time to time. Buildings were erected and destroyed; and individual Empresses had their personal tastes. The Purple Chamber, in which she was required to give birth to her presumably remained the same, until the Court moved finally to the Blachernai Palace.<sup>9</sup> But the family quarters of the imperial couple were probably outside of the gynaikeion, or on its edge. When we learn, from Psellos, that Constantine IX's private quarters lay between those of the Empress Zoe, his wife, and the Sebaste Skleraina, his mistress, they cannot have been right in the gynaikeion.<sup>10</sup> Nicephorus II spent the last night of his life in the Boukoleon Palace, chatting to the Empress Theophano about the two little Bulgarian princesses who had just arrived at the Court; and when she left him she told him to leave the door open, as she would be returning. The Boukoleon Palace was certainly not part of the gynaikeion; but her quarters must have been nearby; indeed, we are told that she had hidden some of the conspirators in them.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand in the days of the great Theodora, she and Justinian seem to have led separate lives, devoted though he was to her. Her quarters were so vast that she could hide a fallen Patriarch in them for twelve years; and the Emperor never discovered him till her death.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps the most remarkable thing about that story is that a secret could be so well kept in Byzantium. It illustrates the loyalty that Theodora commanded. And certainly the Empress was not confined to her quarters. An Empress-Regent moved freely about the Palace, interviewing her ministers and inspecting offices and receiving clients in the imperial reception chambers. Theodora seems to have preferred to make clients wait upon her in her own chambers; but that was not due to self-effacing modesty.<sup>13</sup>

The Empress thus enjoyed a position of high constitutional and material power; and many Empresses showed themselves to be worthy of it, whether as regents or as enterprising consorts, of the calibre of Theodora or her niece Sophia. I must apologize for dealing at some length with Empresses; but they, after all, were the top lady aristocrats in the Empire, and they set the tone for the ladies of the aristocracy who clustered around their Court.

At the head of the Court was the Zostê Patrikia, the Mistress of the Robes, a high official who was invested by the Emperor in person and who was allowed to dine with the Imperial family. She seems usually to have been a relative of the Empress. Theophilos, for instance, appointed his mother-in-law Theoktiste.<sup>14</sup> There were doubtless specially appointed ladies-in-waiting; but on the whole the ladies of the Court seem to have been graded according to their husbands' rank. Their families formed the aristocracy of the Empire.

But what do we mean by the aristocracy? There was really no hereditary aristocracy in the earlier centuries of Byzantium. The aristocracy was then the top layer of the bureaucracy or of the army, mostly new men who had made their way up the social ladder. Their wives were either simple folk who had risen with them, or the daughters of previous officials or generals. Most of the Emperors and Empresses were equally parvenu or the children of parvenus. The only claim to high aristocracy was if you could boast a connection with the Theodosian house - and Theodosius I had himself been a parvenu. The one really aristocratic lady of the time was Juliana Anicia, descended through her mother from both of Theodosius's sons, a lady of great wealth, a patroness of the arts and a great benefactress, who treated with contempt Emperors such as the worthy civil servant Anastasius and, with even greater contempt, the peasant Justin I.<sup>15</sup> There are just a few other great ladies of whom we hear, such as John Chrysostom's great friend, Olympias, a lady who had received an excellent education and spent most of her life as rich widow, famed for her charities and her personal austerity, much despised by the smart circles that surrounded the Empress Eudoxia. Her devotion to Chrysostom led eventually to the confiscation of her wealth.<sup>16</sup> But, owing to her extreme virtue, hers was an untypical life.<sup>16</sup> We have practically no evidence about the lives of her worldlier contemporaries. The one non-royal great lady of the sixth century of whom we know something was Antonina, Belisarius's wife and Theodora's friend. But she was a vulgarian, an ex-actress. We cannot admit her as an aristocrat.<sup>17</sup>

The period from the fall of the ambitious Empress Martina in 642 and the accession of Eirene the Athenian to the regency in 780 is a dim one in the history of Byzantine womanhood. Even of the Empresses we know in many cases only names; and those are only known from the lists of Imperial tombs. Apart from Constantine III's wife, who was a distant cousin of his, and the two Khazar princesses who married Justinian II and Constantine V, their origins are unknown.<sup>18</sup> Presumably they came from the noblesse de robe that surrounded the Court. It seems that the Heraclian and Isaurian Emperors kept women in their place. Indeed, one of the few things that we know about any of their Empresses, was that Anastasia, widow of Constantine IV, was whipped like a naughty school-girl by the Imperial Treasurer, the eunuch Stephen.<sup>19</sup> The method of choosing an imperial wife by means of a

bride-show, seemingly an oriental custom introduced by Constantine V's Khazar wife, shows a rather disrespectful attitude towards the sex, even though it was followed by that stalwart feminist, Eirene the Athenian, when choosing a bride for her son.<sup>20</sup>

Under the Amorians things improved for womanhood. The career of that pious but pert poetess, Kasia, proves the existence of well educated women in Constantinople.<sup>21</sup> Moreover a landed aristocracy was beginning to re-emerge. The bride that Eirene chose for her son, Maria of Amnia, was the grand-daughter of a farmer who amassed a large fortune then lost it owing to an Arab invasion. She seems to have been a dull girl.<sup>22</sup> Danielis, the rich widow at Patras who befriended the future Emperor Basil I, seems also to have been self-made, or it may have been her late husband who started the business. She seems to have had no desire to found a great family; she left her whole fortune to the Emperor.<sup>23</sup> But her contemporary, Theodora, wife of Theophilos, came from a Paphlagonian family (partly Armenian) where the children, especially the sons, had been given a good education: which suggests a certain aristocratic tradition.<sup>24</sup> Certainly, by the next century the great landed families of Anatolia begin to appear, the Doukas and the Phokas and other clans, whose ambitions and quarrels were soon to dominate and largely to ruin Byzantium.

These great families made constant use of dynastic marriages; and such marriages are pointless unless the bride is well enough educated and well enough informed to be capable of influencing her husband. Unfortunately we know little about these noble ladies of the tenth century: unless we can take as fairly typical the lady Theophano, who was sent by her uncle, John Tzimiskes, to marry the Western Emperor, Otto II. She was certainly well educated and well able not only to look after herself, but to look after a vast Empire. Maybe she had been selected by the Emperor because she was obviously an intelligent girl; but she certainly had not been specially educated for the job.<sup>25</sup> In the next century two highborn and cultivated Byzantine ladies married Doges of Venice. One of them introduced the use of forks into Italy.<sup>26</sup> At the end of the eleventh and in the twelfth century we have evidence about ladies of the aristocracy from the Comnenian writers and particularly from Anna Comnena.

It is difficult to say how far we can regard this evidence retrospectively. I suspect that these new aristocratic clans allowed their daughters a freedom of life such as hitherto only the Empress had enjoyed - and the Empress was hampered by having to maintain Imperial dignity. The gynaikeion, or gynaikonitis, has now become merely a room, or a sequence of rooms, sometimes only separated by a curtain from the main reception rooms.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, it should be regarded, I think, rather like a Victorian lady's boudoir, to which men should not come without invitation, but to which many did come, especially if they had some kinship with the lady. Ladies ride freely on horseback through the city. Though ordinarily veiled when they went out, we frequently hear of them removing their veils: which anyhow, I suspect, were worn more to protect the complexion than from modesty. On the other hand a good bourgeoisie like Psellos's mother only removed her veil when she was so stricken by grief that she did not know what she was doing.<sup>28</sup> Ladies were often present when their menfolk discussed politics and indeed took part in the discussions. If they had the taste for it they were free to enjoy the conversation



of scholars. They were educated at home by monks and some very well educated - not many, maybe, as well as Anna herself was (as she frequently reminds us), but her mother enjoyed reading books of theology that Anna herself could not understand.<sup>29</sup> And amongst the princesses and great ladies of the following century there were certainly many who were known for their culture, or, as the Prodomic poems tell us, for their patronage of culture.<sup>30</sup> There is another indication of change. When in the early ninth century the Emperor Michael Rhangabe's wife insisted on accompanying him on a campaign, the soldiers were shocked. But Alexius Comnenus's wife, Anna's mother, was admired for staying by his side during his later campaigns, to see to his health; and she and her daughters nursed him themselves during his last illness, and continually quarrelled with the doctors.<sup>31</sup>

It must be assumed that some of these ladies led quiet domestic lives; but even at home their lives were not secluded. That wise old man Kekaumenos advises us that it is very unwise to have guests to stay. They merely criticise your food and try to seduce your wife.<sup>32</sup> This implies that you had free access to your hostess - she was not living in any sort of purdah. The histories of the times give the impression that almost every noble lady was deeply involved in intrigue. And in these intrigues women had one great advantage. With rather unexpected gallantry the Byzantines were strongly averse to administering any physical punishment on women. The eunuch who spanked the old Empress Anastasia was a Persian. It is true that the Iconoclast Emperors did order a few Iconodule ladies to be scourged: which practically gave them the rank of martyr.<sup>33</sup> In the fifth century the Empress Verina, a doughty old intriguer, was at one time said to have been tortured: which was considered shocking.<sup>34</sup> The only case of mutilation of which I know was when the Empress Martina had her tongue slit. She was so unpopular that no one minded - it was perhaps the only way to stop her talking.<sup>35</sup> There is no case of a woman being blinded. The two Emperors who had women put to death were the two most bloodthirsty in Byzantine history: Phokas, who ordered the execution of the Empress Constantina and her young daughters, on the ground that they had been plotting against him from the monastery in which they were confined; Constantina may have been guilty, her daughters certainly not - <sup>36</sup> Andronikos Comnenus, who had the Empress Maria of Antioch put to death, forcing her young son to sign the death-sentence. He also had the Caesarissa Maria murdered in prison, but that was done informally.<sup>37</sup>

So, unless the Emperor was a monster, a great lady could intrigue happily, knowing that if things went wrong the worst that could happen to her would be confinement in a monastery and perhaps the confiscation of her wealth. Life in a monastery was not necessarily uncomfortable, unless, like the unfortunate Empress Theophano, one was sent to repent of one's sins in an establishment in bleakest Armenia.<sup>38</sup> A lady such as Anna Dalassena, who lived for intrigue till she succeeded in placing her son on the throne, which, to her fury, her brother-in-law had abdicated, was now and then forcibly retired to a monastery, or else went there for self-protection. She seems on those occasions to have been accompanied by her own servants and to have provided for her own keep.<sup>39</sup> Except for grave political offenses there was no question of the lady having to take full monastic vows. A dowager, on the other hand, would usually

retire into a convent, to end her days well cared for in a holy atmosphere, claiming no better treatment than the other elderly folk who were to be found in these altruistic establishments. The elderly bourgeoisie did likewise.<sup>40</sup>

The emergence of these great families meant that family surnames came into use in polite circles; and it is significant that if your mother's surname was smarter than your father's, - or in your grandmother's surname was smarter still, - you took it. Anna Dalassena's father's surname was Charon; but the Dalassenoι were a grander family. None of Anna Comnena's children sank so low as to take their father's surname: though Bryennios was a good name; but Comnenus or Doukas was better. By the fourteenth century the notables usually bore a string of surnames, mentioning all their smart ancestors on both sides.<sup>41</sup>

The aristocracy was continually admitting new families. In spite of the pride of birth shown by someone like Anna Comnena, eminence in the army or the civil service (or just great wealth) could bring one into the charmed circle, especially if one married into it and still more if one displayed the right standards of culture. The Byzantines remained to the last intellectual snobs. In the past the great families had largely been of Armenian stock. Later many of them were descended from some Latin immigrant.<sup>42</sup> But the lives of the ladies seem to have been much the same in the fourteenth as in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, little affected by the period of the Frankokratia and the Empire in Exile. The one difference seems to have been that they spent more time in their country houses than before. In the older days a lady never left the capital and the court voluntarily. Now we find them quite often in their country seats. Partly this must have been due to the effect of the temporary loss of Constantinople, partly to economic considerations, and partly to the reduced size of the Imperial Court; and anyhow, with the reduced size of the Empire itself, most of the country seats were not so far away. It was almost as easy and rather less risky to conduct intrigues from your lands in Thrace than from your town establishment.<sup>43</sup>

Apart from such changes, the life of the fourteenth-century great lady, Theodora, the mother of John Cantacuzenus, very much resembles the life of the eleventh-century Anna Dalassena. Both belonged to the high nobility, though Theodora's actual parentage is unknown - her surnames of Palaiologina-Angelina merely show that she was very well connected, but neither was probably her father's name. Each was a wealthy widow who worked hard for her son's advancement. Theodora, though, in the more restricted circles of her time, might have seemed the more prominent and indeed was for a time entrusted with the government of Didymoteichos, but she died before her son's triumph - died under house arrest, deprived of her servitors.<sup>44</sup>

Among the bourgeoisie ladies' fashions had not much changed. In the fifteenth century the Italian scholar Filelfo noted that Byzantine women always wore veils when out walking and were never unescorted - and incidentally spoke much purer Greek than their menfolk because they never saw foreigners nor men of the working classes. But as he had married a Greek, his statement about foreigners cannot be accurate. However, her mother was Italian:

which may have made a difference - and perhaps he wished to hint that she was a dull girl in order to justify his notorious liaison with his mother-in-law.<sup>45</sup> In the upper classes veils seem to have been discarded, perhaps due to the influence of Western-born Empresses. When John VIII's wife Maria of Trebizond rode to church, her face was wholly visible. Bertrandon de la Brocquière saw her and admired her extraordinary beauty, though he thought that she need not have worn so much make-up.<sup>46</sup>

To the last the great lady played a leading role in Byzantium - and even for a generation beyond. Shortly before the fall of the city the Grand Duke Loukas Notaras, himself perhaps a rich parvenu, but married to a lady with Palaeologan and Cantacuzene blood, sent his unmarried daughter Anna with the holiest of his relics to Venice, where he seems to have kept a prosperous bank account. She claimed to have been affianced to the last Emperor, Constantine, a claim that she would hardly have made at a time when there were many alive who could have shown it up had it been entirely false. Sphrantzes, the devoted chronicler of the Palaeologan family never mentions it; but as he hated her father and had failed to find a bride for the Emperor in Georgia or Trebizond, his silence is understandable. In Venice she was regarded as the undoubted head of the exiled Greek community, by the Venetian government as well as by the Greeks; and she used her position with charity and enterprise for all her long life. She made a splendid figure for closing a study of great women in Byzantium.<sup>47</sup>

Feminists no doubt would find much to criticize in the position of women in Byzantium. But in fact there have been few civilizations in which women of the ruling classes have exercised so much power, and have had the right to do so. Is that, I wonder, why Byzantium managed to last for eleven centuries?

# NOTES

1. For the position of the Empress see J.B. Bury, 'The Constitution of the Later Roman Empire', in Selected Essays, ed. Temperley, pp. 110-2, and in J. Bréhier, Le Monde Byzantin, II, pp. 18-19, 27-33. See also S. Runciman, 'Some notes on the role of the Empress', in Eastern Churches Review, IV, 2 (1972), pp. 119-124.
2. Suggested by Bury in conversation with the author in 1924.
3. See the provisions on marriage and the guardianship of minors in the Ecloga, A Manual of Roman Law: The Ecloga, trans. E.H. Freshfield, pp. 72-79, 87-88, and Introduction, pp. 18-19.
4. See S. Runciman, The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 47-52.
5. S. Runciman, art. cit., pp. 123-4.
6. Leo Grammaticus (Bonn), p. 274. See also J.B. Bury, History of the Eastern Roman Empire, p. 154, for the case of Thekla. Michael II had justified his marriage to the ex-nun by the expressed wish of the senators that their wives should have an Empress to preside over their ceremonies. Theophanes Continuatus (Bonn), p. 78.
7. It is clear that the visit of Olga of Russia to Constantinople caused ceremonial problems. Could a female potentate appear at State banquets? The Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus had to work out a special protocol. See A. Rambaud, L'Empire Grec au Xe. Siècle: Constantin Porphyrogénète (Paris, 1870).
8. Genesius, (Bonn) p. 75; Theophanes Continuatus (Bonn), p. 88.
9. According to Anna Comnena, Alexiad, VI, 8 and VII, 2 (trans. Dawes, pp. 150-1, 169-70), the Purple Chamber, "which had been of old set aside for the confinement of Empresses", was a square room with a pyramidal roof, the floor and walls being covered with purple marble. It looked over the sea near to the Bucoleon harbour. There is no record of a Purple Chamber in the Blachernai Palace, though the title of 'Porphyrogenitus' continued to be used for children born of reigning Emperors.
10. Psellus, Chronographia, VI. 62, ed. Renaud, I, p. 147.
11. Leo Diaconus (Bonn), pp. 87-8; Cedrenus (Bonn), II, pp. 375-6.
12. Michel le Syrien, Chronique, ed. J.B. Chabot (Paris, 1899-1910) II, p. 195.
13. Procopius in the Secret History gives a vivid picture of courtiers waiting in Theodora's stuffy ante-room, standing on tip-toe in order to be noticed by her eunuchs. (Anecdota, Loeb edition, pp. 178-180.)
14. For the Zostê Patrikia see L. Bréhier, Le Monde Byzantin II,

Les Institutions, pp. 124-5. The ceremony of her installation is given in Constantine Porphyrogenitus, De Ceremoniis, pp. 257-261. A passage in the Kleterologion of Philotheos, in Bury, Imperial Administrative System, says that she was entitled to dine with the Emperor, the Patriarch, the Caesars and the Kouropalatai - the Empress is not mentioned, but this must be an error. It is most unlikely that she would be permitted to dine alone with men; her mistress must also have been present. The Zostê Patrikia was clearly superior to the zostai, of whom there were more than one. In the account in the De Ceremoniis, (p. 596), of Princess Olga's reception, five ranks of court ladies joined in the welcoming procession, the zostai, the magistrissai, the patrikiai, the offikiallai protospathareai, and the mere protospathareai. We know of three ladies who were made zostai, the daughter of Tsar Samuel of Bulgaria and the widow of Tsar John Vladislav, after Basil II's conquest of Bulgaria, (Cedrenus (Bonn), II, pp. 451, 474) and in the twelfth century a lady of the Melissenos family, whose seal has survived. (G. Schlumberger, Sigillographie de l'Empire Byzantin, p. 607). Theoktiste is the only zostê patrikia whose name we know.

15. Her family connections made Juliana Anicia a figure of potential importance and immensely rich. See E. Stein, Histoire du Bas-Empire, (Paris-Brussels-Amsterdam, 1949), II, p. 67. n.l. But she seems to have tried to keep clear of politics. Book I of the Greek Anthology contains a long epigram on the Church of St. Polyeuktos which she founded (no. 10), and six short epigrams of her foundation of St. Euphemia (nos. 12-17). She was also responsible for the fine illuminated manuscript of the Materia Medica of Diocurides, now in the National Library in Vienna. It contains her portrait.
16. For the life of Olympias see Jean Chrysostome, Lettres à Olympias, ed. A-M. Malingrey (Paris, 1947), pp. 6-66.
17. See Bury, History of the Later Roman Empire, II, (1923), pp. 56-8.
18. The origins of Constans II's wife, Fausta, and of Constantine IV's wife, Anastasia, are unknown. The wives of Leontios, Tiberius III, Philippikos, Anastasius II and Theodosius III are never mentioned. We are equally ignorant of the origins of Leo III's wife, Maria, and of Constantine V's second and third wives, Maria and Eudocia.
19. Theophanes, I, p. 367: Nicephorus, p. 37, says that the whipping was 'in semblance'.
20. The procedure for selecting candidates for the bridesow, which involved inspectors touring the provinces to find girls from respectable homes who literally measured up to the standards of beauty required by the taste of the Court, are given in the Vita Philareti, ed. Formy and Leroy in B 9 (1934), p. 142, describing the selection of the Saint's grand-daughter, Maria of Amnia, as a possible bride for Constantine VI. The text implies that the practice was not new. Possibly Constantine V

had employed it for the choice of his second and third wives and almost certainly for his son, Leo IV, whose bride was the Athenian Eirene. Staurakios, son of Nicephorus I, Theophilos, Michael III and Leo VI obtained brides by this method. The accounts of Theophilos's choice relate that the intended bridegroom, after inspecting the girls, gave the successful candidate a golden apple. See Bury, Eastern Roman Empire, pp. 81-3.

21. Kasia's life and works are discussed in K. Krumbacher, Kasia, in Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-philologischen und der historischen Klasse der bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 3, (1897), pp. 305-370.
22. After very few years of marriage Constantine VI divorced Maria of Amnia and sent her into a monastery. Theophanes, I, p. 469.
23. See S. Runciman, 'The Widow Danielis', Etudes dédiées à la mémoire d'A. Andréadès (Athens, 1940), pp. 425-431.
24. Theodora's brother, the Caesar Bardas, was, as even his enemies admitted, a man of great culture and intellectual interests. See Bury, Eastern Roman Empire, p. 439.
25. For Theophano, wife of Otto II, see J. Mortmann, Theophano die Gemahlin Ottos II, (Göttingen, 1878), and F. Dolger, 'Wer war Theophano?', BZ 43 (1950), pp. 338 ff.
26. Maria Argyra, cousin of Basil II, married Giovanni Orseolo in 1006, and Theodora Doukaina, sister of Michael VII, married Domenico Silvio in about 1072.
27. Anna Comnena, Alexiad, XV, 8 (trans. Dawes, p. 413): 'A curtain divided the women's apartments from the room where the Emperors sat'.
28. Psellus, Epitaphioi Logoi, in K.N. Sathas, Mesaiônîkê Bibliothêkê, V. p. 30.
29. Anna Comnena, Alexiad, V. 9 (trans. Dawes p. 135).
30. In particular John II's sister-in-law, Eirene, wife of the Sebastokrator Andronicus. See F. Chalandon, Jean II Comnène et Manuel I Comnène, pp. 14, 213.
31. Theophanes, I, p. 495-6; Anna Comnena, Alexiad XII, 3; XV, II (trans. Dawes, pp. 304-7; 420-5).
32. Kekaumenos Strategikon, ed. Wassiliewsky and Jernstedt, pp. 42-3.
33. In about 762 a lady called Anna was scourged in an attempt to make her confess to carnal intercourse with the iconodule martyr, St. Stephen, (Vita Stephani, in Migne, PG 100, col. 1129B). Theodore the Studite refers to two instances of convents whose inmates were flogged, and implies that a noble lady, Eirene suffered the same punishment, (Theodorus Studita, Epistolae, ed. Mai, Nova Patrum Bibliotheca, VIII, 2, ed. Cozza-Luzzi, nos. 59, 68, 91).

34. See E.W. Brooks, 'The Emperor Zenon and the Isaurians', English Historical Review, 8 (1893), pp. 218-9.
35. Theophanes, I, p. 331.
36. Chronicon Paschale (Bonn), pp. 396-7.
37. Niketas Choniates, ed. I.A. Van Dieten (Berlin/New York, 1975), pp. 259-60, 269.
38. Cedrenus (Bonn), II, pp. 380-1.
39. Anna Comnena, Alexiad, II 5 (trans. Dawes p. 55).
40. See D.J. Constantelos, Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare (New Brunswick, 1968), pp. 88 ff., and pp. 222-240, dealing with gerokomeia, old people's homes, which were probably reserved for the aged poor.
41. By the fourteenth century a string of four surnames was not uncommon, (e.g. Constantine Comnenus Maliasenos Doukas Bryennios - Polemis, The Doukai, no. 121, p. 142). Wives usually added their husbands' surnames to their own, (e.g. Anna Cantacuzena Comnena Palaiologina Bryennia Philanthropena, - Nicol, The Family of Kantakouzenos, nos. 39, 40, pp. 149-150). It is often difficult to discover which is the actual patronymic.
42. As, for instance, the great family of Raoul. Many of the great families of the Peloponnese were of Frankish origin, e.g., Phrangopoulos, 'son of the Frank', or Gilopoulos, 'son of Giles'. The eminent family of Asen was of royal Bulgarian origin.
43. In the tenth century the great families seem mostly to have resided on their country estates. In the eleventh century most of them came to Constantinople to be near to the seat of power, and, later in the century, because many of the Anatolian families had lost their estates to the Turks.
44. See Nicol, op. cit., pp. 30-33.
45. For Filelfo, see K. Setton, 'Byzantium and the Italian Renaissance', Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 100, no. 1, pp. 72-3 [reprinted in K.M. Setton, Europe and the Levant in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (London, 1974), I]. D.J. Geanakoplos, Greek Scholars in Venice (Cambridge, Mass., 1962, pp. 32-3.
46. Bertrandon de la Brocquière, Voyage d'Outremer, ed. C. Schefer (Paris, 1892), p. 156.
47. See Geanakoplos, op. cit., pp. 62, with references.

Les débuts d'une aristocratie byzantine et le témoignage de l'historiographie: système des noms et liens de parenté aux IX<sup>e</sup> - X<sup>e</sup> siècles

Evelyn Patlagean

"L'oncle qu'on attendait s'appelait Palamède, d'un prénom qu'il avait hérité des princes de Sicile, ses ancêtres. Et plus tard quand je retrouvai dans mes lectures historiques, appartenant à tel podestat ou tel prince de l'Eglise, ce prénom même, belle médaille de la Renaissance - d'aucuns disaient un véritable antique - toujours resté dans la famille, ayant glissé de descendant en descendant depuis le cabinet du Vatican jusqu'à l'oncle de mon ami, j'éprouvai le plaisir réservé à ceux qui, ne pouvant faute d'argent constituer un médaillier, une pinacothèque, recherchent les vieux noms ..."

Marcel Proust, A l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleur, éd. de la Pléiade, p. 749.

Les aristocraties de l'Occident médiéval sont à l'ordre du jour<sup>1)</sup>. Le terme désigne un groupe restreint au sommet de la société, mais demeure plus ouvert et plus maniable que celui de noblesse, qui signifie pour sa part l'exclusivité héréditaire d'un statut privilégié<sup>2)</sup>. Du côté de Byzance, Ostrogorsky et Beck ont déjà prêté l'oreille, chacun en son temps, à des sirènes comparatives<sup>3)</sup>. Mais quiconque ouvre aujourd'hui le dossier de l'aristocratie byzantine le fait en tout état de cause à la lumière de la problématique mise en oeuvre pour l'Occident, et notamment pour la période formatrice des VII<sup>e</sup> - XI<sup>e</sup> siècles, décisive aussi à Byzance, de Constantin V à Basile II, de 741 à 1025. La question offre des aspects politiques, culturels, économiques, institutionnels: elle commence cependant par la parenté aristocratique, sa structure, son fonctionnement<sup>4)</sup>. L'étude en est liée pour l'Occident au débat ouvert à la suite de Marc Bloch sur la continuité des lignages à partir de l'époque carolingienne, et met donc en jeu d'une part l'illustration du lignage, d'autre part les usages relatifs aux noms propres et l'émergence des noms lignagers. Les travaux d'A.P. Kazhdan ont frayé la voie en ce sens. Dans une première esquisse<sup>5)</sup>, il montrait que l'illustration par la naissance se dessine à Byzance au tournant des IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles, et fait alors concurrence dans les sources à l'éloge du mérite personnel. Il observait aussi que, dans la Chronique de Théophane, 1/5 environ des individus nommés porte un nom de famille, selon lui 22 contre 97, avec un seul exemple de nom commun à deux frères; que ces noms sont pour la plupart vulgaires; et que la proportion s'inverse dans l'oeuvre de Niketas Choniates. Kazhdan publiait ensuite un livre fondamental<sup>6)</sup>, qui se donnait pour objet la définition de la "classe dominante" à Byzance au cours des XI<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles. Il y suivait une méthode sociologique, dans le cadre de laquelle le relevé systématique des noms de famille permettait à la fois une discussion des origines des aristocrates, et une appréciation des solidarités de parentèle, dont le

triomphe des Commènes marque le point culminant, ou pour mieux dire une nouvelle période encore.

Le présent propos se distingue sur plusieurs points de celui de Kazhdan. La période d'abord sera celle des débuts, depuis la dernière génération du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle jusqu'à la première du XI<sup>e</sup>. Ensuite, on s'est délibérément limité à une seule catégorie de sources, l'historiographie. Il convient en effet de reconnaître les contours et la structure du groupe aristocratique, d'inventorier, voire de classer les relations qui le constituent, et que marquent les termes de parenté et les noms. Mais cela ne va pas ici sans considérer ce groupe dans sa dynamique sociale, donc dans la stratégie qui le porte vers le cœur du pouvoir, c'est-à-dire l'empereur régnant. Or, l'historiographie contemporaine, de par sa fonction, son lieu social de rédaction, la situation sociale de ses auteurs, fournit précisément toutes ces données dans leur mouvement et leur genèse<sup>7)</sup>. Nous n'avons pas conservé les œuvres inspirées alors par certaines personnalités aristocratiques, si ce n'est en filigrane, parfois, dans l'historiographie qui nous reste. Celle-ci demeure le récit du pouvoir impérial, de ses hauts faits, des assauts qu'il subit, des rivalités qu'il suscite. Et ceci confère, peut-on penser, une valeur certaine sinon immédiatement claire aux mentions de personnes et de parentés que de tels récits retiennent. On y voit comment, d'un personnage et d'une génération à l'autre, des noms lignagers s'ajoutent progressivement, irrégulièrement, aux noms propres, qui font eux-mêmes office de marqueurs par leur signification et leur transmission; et comment l'examen philologique de ces noms lignagers, proposé par Kazhdan, en fait effectivement un matériau de l'histoire sociale. Enfin, on ne trouve pas seulement là une terminologie de la parenté, mais aussi les associations les plus fréquemment mises en œuvre dans les stratégies des aristocrates. On peut espérer apercevoir ainsi une histoire que les reconstitutions de lignages n'éclairent pas assez, parce qu'elles suivent la plupart du temps la démarche analytique de la prosopographie sans la dépasser<sup>8)</sup>. Mais une autre difficulté se rencontre alors. En raison même de l'importance qu'on vient de rappeler, les œuvres historiographiques des IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles ont donné lieu à un travail intense de manipulation entre contemporains, dont l'étude n'est pas encore achevée<sup>9)</sup>. Dans la perspective qui nous intéressait, nous avons choisi la meilleure cohérence dans la rédaction. Notre premier auteur sera donc Théophane le Confesseur, fils d'un favori de Constantin V, et moine, qui termine sa chronique universelle sous le règne de Michel II. Il sera notre témoin à partir du début du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle<sup>10)</sup>. Ensuite, nous avons retenu les Continuateurs de Théophane, cet atelier historiographique réuni autour de Constantin VII, à l'apogée politique de la dynastie fondée par Basile I<sup>e</sup>. Sans exclure quelques références ponctuelles à "Georges le Moine", à d'autres auteurs du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, à Skylitzès, nous laissons ainsi de côté la nébuleuse de questions soulevée par la Chronique du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, autour de Syméon Logothète ou Magistros. Pour les données antérieures, nous avons choisi l'Histoire Secrète de Procope, la plus proche de nos historiographes par sa conception palatiale. Nous disposons également d'un échantillon épigraphique représentatif, à un niveau social moyen, de l'Antiquité chrétienne en Asie Mineure<sup>11)</sup>. De l'autre côté, la Peira du juge Eustathios atteste, un peu au-delà du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, et pour le même milieu aristocratique, un usage indépendant de toute composition littéraire<sup>12)</sup>. Enfin, quelques documents d'archives permettent la comparaison avec des noms paysans depuis le dernier quart du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

H. Moritz avait déjà étudié la formation et le répertoire des "noms de famille" attestés dans l'historiographie byzantine<sup>13)</sup>. Mais, depuis ce

travail toujours utile, la recherche s'est enrichie et précisée. L'histoire ancienne a examiné le système onomastique grec sous l'Empire, la diffusion puis le déclin des tria nomina, marque de la conquête romaine dans les noms des sujets, les débuts de l'anthroponymie chrétienne<sup>14)</sup>. L'histoire médiévale a prêté de son côté attention à la fin du système antique, à la part de germanisation de l'anthroponymie occidentale, à l'émergence du nom de famille, quelle que soit l'extension donnée à ce dernier groupement, et sa signification sociale<sup>15)</sup>. L'anthropologie a récemment éclairé les historiens par des études sur les fonctions actuellement exercées dans les paysanneries européennes par les éléments de l'appellation des personnes, nom de baptême, nom de famille, sobriquet<sup>16)</sup>. Enfin, un chapitre admirable de S. D. Goitein, dans son volume sur les familles dans les documents de la Geniza, offre des suggestions très riches sur le système des noms, à partir d'un matériel juif méditerranéen, et peu éloigné dans le temps de notre période<sup>17)</sup>.

L'histoire sociale du système onomastique byzantin prend donc comme point de départ l'Antiquité tardive en son domaine d'expression grecque. La tradition séculaire y était celle du nom personnel unique, accompagné de celui du père, et porteur d'une signification plus ou moins clairement perceptible encore (ex. Kallinikos). Ces noms se transmettent le plus souvent de grand-père à petit-fils, et d'oncle à neveu, parfois avec des variantes, et de même pour les femmes. Les tria nomina introduits par la romanisation perdent leur pertinence, après une étape intermédiaire où le nomen Aurelios se généralise, au cours des III<sup>e</sup>-IV<sup>e</sup> siècles<sup>18)</sup>. Dès lors, l'usage grec est à nouveau fondé sur le nom unique, auquel l'Occident arrivait de son côté à la même époque, mais par des voies différentes, où intervenait l'élément germanique. Le nom unique triomphe dans nos deux ensembles témoins: l'Histoire Secrète de Procope, où nous comptons au total 78 noms d'homme, 13 noms de femme; l'échantillon épigraphique qui offre sauf erreur 250 noms d'homme, 149 noms de femme. Mais on y discerne aussi les questions que le système avait à résoudre. Le nom unique lui-même, tout d'abord, que nous désignerons désormais comme nom propre, est porteur, disions-nous, d'un sens, et l'on met celui-ci en rapport, nous le verrons, avec la destinée de la personne<sup>19)</sup>. Il faut alors concilier cette exigence et celle de la transmission familiale du nom propre. Au surplus, ce dernier ne suffit pas à situer et à définir les individus, surtout au sein d'un groupe topographiquement ou socialement limité. L'historiographie et les inscriptions ont alors recours aux mêmes moyens: l'indication du père, et aussi, chez Procope, de l'oncle ou du cousin<sup>20)</sup>; l'adjectif d'origine, la fonction, le métier; enfin, le "nom ajouté" (epiklên, epiklêsis). Chacune de ces précisions n'est pas exclusive des autres, et elles sont d'autant plus nécessaires que le répertoire des noms est plus réduit. On le voit bien dans le cas des dix Joannis de l'Histoire Secrète: deux d'entre eux sont identifiés par leur père (V 31; XII 6), un troisième comme neveu (V 7), tandis que le fils de Theodora est de père anonyme (XVII 17); le fameux préfet du prétoire est désigné comme "le Cappadocien" (I 14); deux autres sont l'un préposé au Trésor (XXII 33), l'autre archevêque de Constantinople (VI 26); enfin, on relève des surnoms, qui appartiennent à la langue commune dans leur fond comme dans leur forme<sup>21)</sup>, Kyrtoç (VI 5, "le Bossu"), Phagas (IV 4, "le Bouffeur"), Laxarion (XXIX 1). On découvre des surnoms similaires sur les pierres tombales de Korykos, c'est-à-dire dans une collectivité relativement close<sup>22)</sup>.

Le répertoire onomastique lui-même demeure pourtant, à la même époque, assez large. Le nombre des Joannis n'est encore dans l'Histoire Secrète qu'une exception prémonitoire. Cependant, si l'on quitte les acteurs du



récit historiographique pour les épitaphes provinciales, le tableau change: les homonymes se multiplient, et la proportion de noms chrétiens augmente, le second fait expliquant le premier, au moins en partie. Sauf erreur, on trouve du côté masculin huit exemples de Paulos, autant d'Alexandros, quatre pour Aniketos, trois pour Joannis et autant pour Kyriakos; du côté féminin, neuf exemples de Kyrilla - auxquels on peut ajouter Kyria (1) et Kyriakê (2) - sept pour Matronê, cinq pour Paula et Paulina, quatre pour Thekla, autant (plus un cas douteux) pour Maria. Autrement dit, cinq noms se partagent près d'un dixième des hommes et un cinquième des femmes. Ajoutons que cinquante noms masculins sont encore précédés de Aur(elios), et trente neuf féminins, soit respectivement un cinquième et un quart des totaux, sans que nous puissions faire une ventilation chronologique. Certes, ces exemples ne sont que des exemples: nos inscriptions attestent peut-être des préférences provinciales, tandis qu'il eût suffi d'ajouter le dépouillement des Guerres du même Procope pour accroître le nombre de noms étrangers. On ne leur refusera pas cependant une certaine qualité de suggestion, que met en relief la confrontation avec la Chronique de Théophane.

Sauf erreur, Théophane atteste 108 noms propres masculins à compter de 610 jusqu'à la fin de sa Chronique, et quatorze d'entre eux se partagent la moitié du total: Konstantinos et Nikêtas (sept fois chacun), Joannis et Theodoros (cinq fois chacun), Stephanos, Theophylaktos, Michaël, Leôn (quatre fois chacun), Nikêphoros (trois fois), Theophanes, Theophilos, Gregorios (deux fois chacun). Les noms commençant par Nikê - et par Theo - peuvent d'ailleurs être regroupés. Ce lot diffère du précédent par des noms d'origine étrangère, et singulièrement arménienne, Arsabêr, Vartan sous différentes formes d'hellénisation (Bardas, Bardanes, Bardanion), et surtout par la richesse et la fréquence de l'onomastique chrétienne, ou pour mieux dire déjà byzantine. Le témoignage de Théophane est en revanche comparable à cet égard à celui des Continuators. On ne trouve pas trace, d'autre part, de l'exclusivité lignagère, et donc sociale, conférée à certains noms dans l'Occident carolingien<sup>23</sup>). La prédilection des Doukai pour le nom d'Andronikos, chargé de valeur guerrière, est un cas d'espèce: mais le nom, sans être aussi courant que d'autres, ne leur devient pas propre, et il est attesté du reste dès notre échantillon antique. Les noms impériaux de Constantin et de Léon, ceux des apôtres André et Jean, des saints Nicolas et Georges, ceux des Irène et des Theodora semblent alors diffusés largement. On objectera que la Chronique de Théophane se déroule précisément dans le cercle du pouvoir. Il est vrai, et des comptages systématiques dans le matériel disponible pour la même période, hagiographie, sceaux, inscriptions, permettraient de discerner, par des tableaux de fréquences<sup>24</sup>), l'histoire culturelle et sociale des noms propres à ce tournant où Byzance a vraiment laissé l'Antiquité derrière elle. Prenons seulement ici deux autres exemples. Un document de Lavra, en date probablement de 974<sup>25</sup>), comporte une liste de trente deux paysans, dans laquelle huit noms se partagent les deux tiers du total: Demetrios (quatre fois), Konstantinos et Basileios (trois fois chacun), soit un répertoire serré et christianisé, où figurent les noms portés par les empereurs des VIII<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles. La Peira manifeste de son côté une évolution plus poussée encore: abstraction faite d'une longue question matrimoniale, on relève soixante huit mentions masculines, dont vingt six seulement offrent un nom propre, notamment Michaël et Petros (trois fois chacun), Leôn, Romanos et Sergios (deux fois chacun); la plupart des autres portent seulement un nom de famille, directement ou sous la forme d'une indication de filiation, et quelques-uns ne sont désignés que par leur fonction. Une seule femme sur huit, "la patrikia Maria Kastorissa", figure

avec nom propre et nom de famille. Les autres sont désignées comme "épouse de" ou "fille de", sans mention de nom propre, ce qui rappelle non seulement une tendance de l'historiographie, lorsqu'il ne s'agit pas de femmes impériales, mais aussi l'usage de la Geniza étudié par Goitein.

Le stock des noms propres byzantins apparaît donc entraîné par une modification séculaire, de sens probablement culturel plus que social. Ces noms n'échappent pas pour autant à la contradiction dans laquelle nous avons vu enfermé le nom grec antique, marquant par sa transmission la position de l'individu dans la famille, mais par son sens la destinée de celui qui le porte. Voici d'abord le cas de Théophane lui-même, mort en 817. Fils d'Isaakios et de Theodotê, il a reçu au baptême son nom, qui rappelle celui de sa mère. Puis, en raison de l'affection portée à Isaakios par Constantin V, ce dernier "ajoute" plus tard à Théophane le "nom paternel". En revanche, il conservera ce nom de baptême comme nom "d'habit" monastique. Il épouse une fille de son milieu, nommée à son baptême Megalô, nom de même formation commune que ceux des petites danseuses de mauvaise vie de l'Histoire Secrète, Komitô (IX,3), et Chrysomallô (XVII, 33 et 34)<sup>26</sup>). Lorsqu'elle quitte le monde avec lui, après l'avènement d'Irène, Théophane change son nom en celui d'Eirênê, "d'une façon chrétienne, mais aussi avec à propos": il joue ainsi sur le sens du nom, et sur la référence à l'impératrice. Considérons maintenant Euthymios le jeune, mort en 898, et fils d'une "maison militaire"<sup>27</sup>). Il a pour père Epiphaneios, "ainsi appelé selon la divine Epiphanie", et ce nom passe à l'une de ses soeurs, Epiphaneia. Lui-même a reçu au baptême le nom de Nikêtas, par un choix que l'hagiographe n'explique pas. Il y discerne en revanche une intention divine, puisque le futur saint "devait en vertu de son nom remporter la victoire sur les ennemis visibles et invisibles". On le voit néanmoins fêter le martyr du même nom. Sa mère lui choisit pour épouse une jeune fille du même milieu, "qui montrait des grâces par son nom seul": Euphrosynê. L'épousant, il le change pour celui d'Anastasô. "en vertu de l'espoir que le lignage tombé allait ressusciter". Puis, le saint entre dans un monastère, et le supérieur lui confère le nom d'Euthymios, sans doute pour signifier, écrit l'hagiographe, que l'on était passé du "découragement" au "bon courage", après que les images eussent été restaurées. Une contemporaine d'Euthymios, la moniale Theodora de Thessalonique (812-892)<sup>28</sup>), a reçu au baptême le nom d'Agapê, "afin d'annoncer à l'avance par le nom donné la vie de la fillette". "Il ne faut pas, poursuit l'hagiographe, assigner le nom selon la seule volonté des parents. Il doit être aussi un gage d'amour envers le Seigneur, comme la suite l'a montré". Ces exemples attestent la double entorse qui peut être faite alors au principe de la transmission familiale du nom propre. La signification de celui-ci est déterminante, parce que prémonitoire. Et l'on en change en effet lorsqu'on change de condition, par le mariage et par la prise d'habit. Si l'époux change le nom de l'épousée, on vient de le voir, la tonsure, comme le baptême, requiert un père spirituel, qui impose le nom monastique. Ainsi, le patriarche Nicolas I<sup>e</sup> "tonsura (Zoê mère de Constantin VII), changea son nom pour celui d'Anna, et il l'appelait sa fille spirituelle"<sup>29</sup>). L'auteur de la Vie de Makarios de Peleketê observe que l'on change de même le nom des esclaves que l'on vient d'acheter<sup>30</sup>).

La famille impériale constitue alors un cas particulier, mais inscrit dans le système. Lorsque Léon V arrive au trône, et change en Constantin au couronnement le nom de son fils Symbatios (arménien Smbat), il reconstitue implicitement le couple Léon III/Constantin V (Theophanes Cont. p. 41): le motif est encore plus fort que celui d'Heraklios appelant "nouveau Constantin" son fils et homonyme (Theophanes, p. 300). La

première des deux Irène du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, fille du khagan des Khazars, reçoit ce nom au baptême lorsqu'elle épouse Constantin V *ibid.*, p. 409, 30-410, 3), peut-être en raison de son sens. Mais la seconde, épouse de Léon IV fils des précédents, est née chrétienne, et porte jusqu'à son mariage le nom d'Athenais (*ibid.*, p. 444, 16). Il y aurait là une ébauche de lien entre le nom et la fonction, mais une ébauche seulement, puisque le nom d'Irène ne devient pas exclusif. Au X<sup>e</sup> siècle, la famille impériale donne l'exemple des règles de transmission des noms propres. Constantin VII porte le nom du fils d'un premier lit de Basile (Theophanes Cont. p. 264), Romain II celui de son grand-père Romain I<sup>e</sup>, Constantin VIII celui de son grand-père Constantin VII. Basile II rappelle évidemment son aïeul Basile I<sup>e</sup>, mais son nom est aussi celui de son oncle maternel, le *parakoïmomenos* Basile le Bâtard, dont on sait le rôle important. Des filles de Constantin VII, les deux premières portent les noms de leurs grand-mères paternelle et maternelle respectivement, Zoë et Theodora; Agathê semble nommée d'après une soeur de sa mère, Anna d'après l'épouse d'un frère de sa mère, Stephanos (*ibid.*, p. 422); mais Zoë fille de Zaoutzês avait aussi mis au monde une fille ainsi appelée (*ibid.*, p. 364), qui était donc la demi-soeur de Constantin VII. Enfin, sa fille Theophanê rappelle peut-être la première et sainte épouse de Léon VI, objet d'un culte public<sup>31</sup>). Ce nom est aussi celui de l'épouse de Constantin, le plus jeune fils de Romain I<sup>e</sup> (*ibid.* p. 423), et enfin il est conféré lors de son mariage à l'épouse de Romain II par Constantin VII lui-même (*ibid.* p. 458), "en tant que manifestée et choisie divinement", note l'historiographe officiel. Peut-être y a-t-il eu là, comme dans le cas d'Irène, l'ébauche d'un usage impérial de ce nom.

Les remarques qui précèdent voulaient montrer que le nom propre conserve sa double fonction de marqueur familial fixe, et d'expression vivante, et donc changeante, de la destinée individuelle. En tout état de cause, il ne suffit pas à spécifier assez les personnes au sein d'un milieu comme celui qu'embrasse le récit historiographique, même si l'on fait appel aux diminutifs pour distinguer entre des homonymes, comme ce parent de Bardas et de Michel III, que les Continuateurs appellent non seulement Theophilos et "le petit Theophilos", mais Theophilidion, Theophilitzês, et qui portait de surcroît le curieux nom de Paideuomenos, "Eduqué" (*ibid.*, pp. 224-225, 226, 229). Les spécifications annexes obéissent donc à la nécessité historiographique, et auparavant sociale, de distinguer les individus, tout en les situant dans la société politique, et dans leur propre parentèle. Le problème s'avère alors différent pour les hommes et les femmes. La *Chronique* de Théophane précise presque toujours la fonction et le titre des personnages masculins. Mais la fonction est sujette à changer, et la fréquence du titre de patrice le rend peu spécifiant. Ce ne sont encore que les critères qui tracent le contour du groupe social, sans même permettre d'apprécier son ouverture. D'autres moyens de spécifier les individus se présentent alors: nom de père, indications de parenté, mention de l'origine, enfin surnom. On les trouve rarement toutes réunies pour la même personne, ce qui confirme leur caractère fonctionnel, sans que le choix opéré par le narrateur se laisse expliquer à première vue. Dans la partie que nous avons dépouillée, Théophane présente seulement cinq (ou six) mentions d'origine, auxquelles on peut ajouter le nom de Boïlas (Theophanes, pp. 446-447), qui est en fait un titre bulgare<sup>32</sup>), et le surnom de Tourkos, qui qualifie Bardanes, stratège des Anatoliques révolté contre Nicéphore I<sup>e</sup> (*ibid.*, p. 479). Les mentions de parenté ne semblent pas davantage primordiales: deux d'un frère, deux d'une parenté impériale, une quinzaine du père. Ces dernières sont conformes à la tradition antique. Le nom du père y apparaît parfois à la limite du patronyme: ainsi, Theophylaktos "fils de Rangabé" (*ibid.*, p. 454), *drongarios* du Dodécane, a pour fils

Michel Rangabé - le futur empereur.

Reste alors le surnom, que j'écrirais volontiers sur-nom, tant il est clairement perçu comme une addition spécifiante au nom propre. Dans la majorité des exemples anciens, soit jusqu'à la fin du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, il est introduit, comme le notait Kazhdan<sup>33</sup>) par la formule "surnommé, appelé encore" (*ho/to epiklên*). On trouve aussi simplement *ho* ... ou *ho rêtheis* "appelé". Le surnom peut naître d'une circonstance: le patriarche Constantin est appelé "Face de ténèbres" (*Skotiopsis*) en 768, lors de sa chute (*ibid.*, p. 441). Mais le plupart du temps il fait office de marqueur stable. Un dérivé de nom propre comme Martinakios est déjà, lui, aussi, à la limite du patronyme (*ibid.*, p. 438)<sup>34</sup>). La plupart des autres surnoms se répartissent clairement en deux familles. L'une est inspirée par les particularités individuelles: "Rousseau" (*Rousios*, *ibid.*, p. 368), "Joue d'âne" (*Onomagoulos*, *ibid.*, p. 398), "Quarante coudées" (*Sarantapêkhys*, *ibid.*, 474), "Costaud" (*Karteroukas*, *ibid.*, p. 377), "Pied de crabe" (*Podopagouros*, *ibid.*, p. 438), "Doigt coupé" (*Koutzodaktylos*, *ibid.*, p. 445). L'autre se réfère au quotidien familial, voire rustique. Ici les noms mêmes deviennent surnoms: "le moineau" (*Strouthos*, *ibid.*, p. 380), "la chenille" (*Lakhanodrakôn*, *ibid.*, p. 440), "la chicorée" (*Pikridion*, *ibid.*, p. 465), "le chiot" (*Kouloukês*, *ibid.*, p. 445). Là les surnoms sont des formations dérivées: *Xuylinîtês* (*xuylinê*) "bois", *ibid.*, p. 400), *Myakios* (*myax* "huitre", *ibid.*, p. 383), *Triphyllios* (*Triphyllion* "trèfle", *ibid.*, p. 476). Les formes sont elles-mêmes vernaculaires. Les suffixes qu'on vient de voir, ou l'exemple de *Sarantapêkhys*, le démontrent amplement. Ce type de surnom aussi est parfois à la limite du nom transmissible dès le VII<sup>e</sup> siècle: "le fils de Grégorios *Onomagoulos*" est lui-même désigné plus loin comme "ho *Onomagoulos*" (*ibid.*, p. 398), tandis que les frères *Triphyllioi* sont nommés au pluriel (*ibid.*, p. 476). Rien ne signale en revanche d'autres noms, que nous savons en fait avoir été transmis dès cette époque: *Melissenos*, *Boïlas*, *Sarantapêkhys*. Plus tard, Bardas, fils d'une soeur de Theodora, épouse de Théophile, s'appellera *Kontomytês* comme l'homme dont il est le *gambros*, ici le gendre (Theophanes Cont. p. 175).

Avec les Continuateurs de Théophane et leur récit des IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles, bien des éléments demeurent. Il n'y a pas lieu de revenir sur les noms propres, sur la spécification des personnages par le titre et la fonction, souvent aussi par l'origine: nation<sup>35</sup>), cité<sup>36</sup>), thème<sup>37</sup>), voire même le domicile dans la capitale. Voici par exemple le gendre choisi par l'empereur Théophile, (*ibid.*, p. 107): "nommé Alexios, sur-nommé Mouselé, venu du pays des Arméniens, issu du lignage des Krênitai"; et le Continuateur ajoute à toutes ces précisions qu'il demeurerait "dans le quartier de l'acropole, aux maisons dites de la Krênitissa"<sup>38</sup>). Le passage se fait insensiblement, et cas par cas, de telles indications d'origine au patronyme proprement dit que sont devenus *Kamoulianos* (Theophanes, p. 465, Theophanes Cont. p. 397) ou *Ibêritzês* (Skylitzes, p. 187, l. 69). Mais le véritable changement est déterminé par l'importance nouvelle que revêtent dans la vie politique la parentèle et son illustration. Le Continuateur épingle "les ascendants obscurs" de Thomas dit le Slave, l'instigateur du soulèvement provincial de 821 (Theophanes Cont. p. 51). Les généalogies sont données sur trois générations. Ainsi en usent le Continuateur pour Theodora, l'épouse de Théophile (*ibid.*, pp. 174-175); et le moine Nikêtas, lorsqu'il compose vers 821-22 la célèbre *Vie de Philarète le Miséricordieux*<sup>39</sup>), son grand-père et parrain, dont une petite-fille, Marie, avait été la première épouse de Constantin VI. Le système onomastique semble évoluer en conséquence. *Epiklên* décline au



profit de onomazomenos "nommé", to epônymion "de sur-nom", et surtout epilegomenos "dit en outre". Le nom lignager transmis se distingue dès lors du surnom personnel. Le patrice Himerios, écrit par exemple le Continuateur (*ibid.*, p. 172), "était appelé le Porc (Khoiros) en raison de la sauvagerie de sa physionomie". La Vie de Basile (*ibid.*, p. 253) présente une version mieux séante: le surnom a été attribué par l'empereur "en raison de la sauvagerie de la figure", "mais il méritait l'appellation pour sa vie de porc, sa vie sale pour mieux dire, etc." Le mécanisme du surnom individuel demeure là vivant et clairement perçu. Mais les allusions au lignage (genos, genea, seira) se multiplient. Et surtout un nombre croissant de personnages sont présentés avec un second nom, parfois même avec ce dernier seul.

Prenons l'exemple de Sklêros, "le dur", devenu le nom transmissible d'un lignage d'origine arménienne. Au début du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle le nom est déjà lignager: la Chronique dite de Monemvasie mentionne à l'année 805 un stratège du Péloponnèse "appartenant au clan (phatria) de ceux qu'on surnomme (eponomazomenôn) Sklêroi"; le Scriptor incertus désigne un contemporain de Michel I, lui aussi stratège du Péloponnèse, comme "Léon sur-nommé (fils de) Sklêros"<sup>40</sup>. De telles façons de nommer persistent, puisque Nikêtas "dit en outre (epilegomenos) Sklêros" (Theophanes Cont., p. 358) est un contemporain de Léon VI. Mais le récit de la guerre paulicienne (*ibid.*, p. 166) mentionne "le Sklêros" simplement. Pour les Phokas, l'émergence du nom lignager s'est faite à partir du nom propre de l'aïeul, à travers son usage comme indication de filiation. De fait, on observe fréquemment la solution transitoire où le patronyme est présenté ainsi, par exemple "le (fils) d'Argyros" (*ibid.*, p. 165). Dans le cas des Lekapenoi, il y a eu flottement: Theophylaktos, le père du futur empereur, porte le fier surnom d'Abastaktos, "l'insoutenable"; mais Romain I<sup>e</sup> et ses fils en porteront un autre, tiré peut-être d'un lieu d'origine<sup>41</sup>. Dans un milieu où les noms ajoutés aux noms propres sont en voie de devenir transmissibles, sans l'être encore régulièrement, leur mention par l'historiographe renvoie évidemment à la solidarité de la parentèle et à l'illustration de l'ascendance, voire aux deux ensemble. Toutefois, les personnages désignés par leur seul nom propre, avec leur titre le cas échéant, se rencontrent toujours. Il peut s'agir d'un homme assez notable pour se suffire à lui-même dans le récit, tel le patrice Nikêtas, "co-beau-père" (sympentheros) de Romain I<sup>e</sup> (*ibid.*, p. 413), ou au contraire d'un homme nouveau. Ainsi, à aucun moment le futur Basile I<sup>e</sup> n'est pourvu d'un nom ajouté à son nom propre, si l'on excepte le surnom personnel de Kephalas "la Caboché", qu'il aurait reçu dans sa jeunesse obscure<sup>42</sup>. Certes, le second nom peut manquer si le personnage vient d'être introduit dans le récit. Mais la nécessité de distinguer les homonymes demeurent, et même ne fait que croître, comme en témoigne le récit que fait Léon Diacre des luttes menées autour du pouvoir impérial par les Phokades et les Sklêroi<sup>43</sup>.

Le répertoire des noms ajoutés obéit aux tendances observées dans le relevé précédent, où quelques-uns d'entre eux, on l'a dit, se trouvaient déjà. On retrouve les noms tirés de toponymes, et proches de l'adjectif d'origine. Quelques noms lignagers sont tirés de noms propres. L'exemple classique et déjà cité de Phokas n'est pas le seul, et Constantin, dernier fils de Romain I<sup>e</sup>, épouse Theophanê "issue du lignage de Mamas" (*ibid.*, p. 423). Gabriêlopoulos (*ibid.*, p. 380) et Theodotakês (*ibid.*, p. 361) attestent des formations promises à un bel avenir. Les variantes sur le nom propre, comme Môroleôn ("le sot Léon", *ibid.*, p. 404), Barymichaêl ("Gros-Michel", *ibid.*, p. 395) sont elles aussi au seuil du patronyme. Les deux groupes majeurs définis plus haut se maintiennent. L'un renvoie à la

personne physique et morale: "Pied plat" (Platypodês, *ibid.*, p. 401), "Camus" (Kontomytês, *ibid.*, p. 175), "Beau gars" (Kallônas, *ibid.*, p. 369), mais aussi "le fort" (Krateros, *ibid.*, p. 458). L'autre se réfère à la vie matérielle. On y relève beaucoup de plantes: Krambônîtês, transmissible, vient du "chou" (krambê, Theophanes Cont., p. 39), Gongylîos, transmissible, du "chou-rave" (gongyli, *ibid.*, p. 386), Maroulis de la "laitue" (marouli, *ibid.*, p. 389). On rencontre aussi "l'argent" dans le nom déjà cité d'Argyros, "l'ivoire" dans celui d'Elephantînos (*ibid.*, p. 421). Un autre contingent est celui des noms de métier, dont Khoiropsphaktês "l'égorgeur de porcs" (*ibid.*, p. 359) reste l'exemple classique. Mais la question est en fait compliquée par l'importance croissante des noms en -as, bien attestés dès la langue antique, demeurés caractéristiques du grec vivant<sup>44</sup>, et nettement plus nombreux que dans la série précédente. Le suffixe a fait des noms transmissibles d'une fonction (Doux/Doukas), d'un nom propre (Grêgoras), il a hellénisé l'arménien Gurgên (Kourkouas). On le trouvait dans les attributs physiques déjà cités (Kephalas, Kallônas), et dans des formations qui peuvent renvoyer à un métier, Garidas "vendeur de crevettes" (*ibid.*, p. 392), Kassiteras "étameur" (*ibid.*, p. 22), Zônaras et Toxara (*ibid.*, pp. 442 et 388), "fabricant de ceintures" et "d'arcs". Le diminutif -tzês, que nous avons vu utilisé dans la spécification d'un nom propre apparaît ici aussi, par exemple dans Boïditzês "le petit boeuf" (*ibid.*, p. 130).

Tout ceci n'autorise pas de considérations générales sur la formation des noms ajoutés grecs aux IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles. Nous avons en effet envisagé ici, rappelons-le, le seul usage historiographique, et encore sur deux exemples essentiellement. Nous ferons cependant quelques remarques et suggestions. En premier lieu, nos relevés n'éclairent pas vraiment les origines ethniques des acteurs de la grande histoire, en particulier le rôle pourtant connu des Arméniens. Les noms propres comme Bardas, le plus courant, en conservent et en transmettent la trace, ainsi que des noms lignagers comme Mouselê ou Kourkouas déjà cités. Mais l'hellénisation d'un patronyme arménien n'est pas la règle, comme on s'en convaincra en considérant l'inventaire dressé par Kazhdan<sup>45</sup>. Peut-être les noms déjà illustres et transmissibles franchissaient-ils seuls la frontière. Quoi qu'il en soit, nous avons en substance sous les yeux un système grec, lequel s'avère en revanche tout à fait homogène dans sa verdeur parlée. Aucune distance sociale ne sépare la formation de Kheilas "la Lippe" (*ibid.*, p. 172), sobriquet d'un obscur compagnon de Michel III, et celle de Kephalas, nom porté au début du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle par Constantin, protopapas du palais (Georgius Monachus, p. 806), puis sous Alexis I<sup>e</sup> Connène par Léon, dignitaire (vestarkhos), et bénéficiaire d'une donation<sup>46</sup>. Il faudrait en fait déchiffrer le sens même des choix. Les dénominations valorisantes, Krateros, Sklêros, Abastaktos, se conçoivent aisément. Les allusions plus ou moins narquoises aux particularités physiques mériteraient déjà un examen plus attentif, dans la mesure où elles renvoient à un code que l'on pourrait reconstituer. Et surtout, pourquoi la laitue, pourquoi le chou-rave? Anecdote, image, ou symbole? Le problème ne peut être abordé dans un cadre aussi réduit que le nôtre.

Ajoutons cependant que les noms de paysans connus à partir de la même époque relèvent des mêmes principes. La liste des trente-deux paysans dépendants dressée vers 974<sup>47</sup> spécifie les individus comme fils ou comme époux de fille/soeur (gambros), avec de exceptions significatives: Léon d'Abydos, un immigré; trois hommes désignés par leur seul métier, "maçon" (oikodomos), "forgeron" (khalkêus), boukellarîos, tandis que les pères désignés comme "le moissonneur" (theri ...), "le boucher" (makella ...), ou

encore "le Paphlagonien" attestent des mentions à mi-chemin du patronyme, sans que nous en puissions vraiment juger; enfin, des sobriquets comme "Lèvre-Coupée" (*Khopsokheilios*, "bec-de-lièvre"?) suffisent à spécifier d'autres individus. Le document ne peut rien nous dire sur la transmissibilité de tous ces sur-noms, mais il prouve leur nécessité, puisque, sur un total de trente deux noms propres, on l'a vu, huit se répètent au moins deux fois. Poussée jusqu'au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle et au delà<sup>47</sup>), une confrontation entre l'anthroponymie des paysans et celle des aristocrates montrerait à la fois des sur-noms communs aux deux groupes, mais aussi, peut-on penser, une fixité plus grande des sur-noms devenus aristocratiques, et donc une divergence croissante: du moins est-ce l'hypothèse que l'on peut dessiner ici. Quoi qu'il en soit, dans la période initiale que nous considérons l'anthroponymie byzantine est une. En sorte que ces sur-noms qui ressuscitent pour nous le grec vernaculaire de l'époque, ne paraissent attester non pas, comme on le penserait trop vite, un ample mouvement de montée des profondeurs sociales vers les sommets du pouvoir, mais plutôt, sans préjudice de l'origine des individus, le degré d'unité culturelle d'une société qui recommence à se différencier sur de nouvelles bases au lendemain des bouleversements des VII<sup>e</sup>-VIII<sup>e</sup> siècles. Le groupe dominant dont titres et fonctions tracent le contour se constitue lentement, et surtout progressivement, au cours des IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles: le signe de la réussite serait alors, cas par cas, la transformation du sur-nom individuel en nom lignager, car celle-ci atteste l'intégration désormais stable et définitive à la couche sociale en question, comme ailleurs à la cellule villageoise. Le nom lignager ne se met pas couramment au féminin dans l'historiographie que nous avons examinée, pas plus que dans la *Peira*, on l'a vu. Le fait devient au contraire régulier à partir des Commènes. Le décalage est sans doute significatif, et constituerait un indice de fermeture du milieu aristocratique, désormais soucieux de manifester des deux côtés une ascendance de qualité. Il va de soi que le jeu des noms lignagers n'est là que la marque d'une évolution accomplie.

Considérons en effet maintenant les parentèles dans leur travail collectif de promotion politique. Le terme de *famille* au sens moderne, large ou restreint, demeure évidemment inconnu. Outre les différentes désignations du "lignage" déjà citées, l'historiographie connaît "la parentèle" (*syngeneia*), et "les parents" (*syngeneis*). Les "parents" de Zoé fille de Zaoutzès sont convaincus de conjuration à sa mort, et chassés du palais<sup>49</sup>). On "fait descendre du palais les parents" de Jean Garidas, lorsque celui-ci réclame en faveur du frère de sa femme, Theodoros Zouphinezer (*Theophanes Cont.* p. 392). La maison (*oikos*) se manifeste également, ensemble à nos yeux complexe, dans lequel une parentèle se renforce de ses "amis" (*philoï*) de ses "familiers" (*oikeioi*), voire de ses "hommes" (*anthropoi*)<sup>50</sup>). Tous ceux-là, qui se distinguent pour nous des parents, ne s'en séparent pas dans l'action mise en scène par l'historiographie byzantine. Le plus bel exemple d'un tel groupe est suggéré par la conjuration et l'exil d'Andronikos Doukas pendant la minorité de Constantin VII (*Georgius Monachus*, p. 789)<sup>51</sup>). C'est avec un tel concours que l'on s'avance vers le pouvoir. Les récits du meurtre de Michel III associent frères et cousin à ce Basile présenté jusque là comme un inconnu isolé (*ibid.*, p. 750). Au X<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'échec des Doukai, le succès temporaire des Lekapenoï, celui des Phokades alliés aux Maleinoï et aux Skléroï sont les exemples les plus notoires de stratégies familiales caractéristiques de toute l'époque et de toute l'aristocratie. C'est la raison pour laquelle l'historiographie du temps note les parentés et leurs pratiques, et cela dans une terminologie propre aux besoins de son récit politique, comme le montre la comparaison avec l'historiographie antérieure,

et avec le droit contemporain, où s'achève alors l'élaboration canonique des interdits de mariage<sup>52</sup>).

Le repérage de loin le plus fréquent est celui des pères/fils. Nous relevons sauf erreur quatorze mentions, auxquelles s'ajoutent un fils "naturel" (*physikos*, *Theophanes Cont.* p. 442). En outre, *kata ton* (sept fois), déjà usité chez Théophane, introduit également le nom du père. La fratrie se manifeste directement dans l'action: les Gongylioi, mêlés au soulèvement de Léon Phokas, sont deux (*ibid.*, p. 386), les Phokas aussi à la génération de Nicéphore II; les frères Parsakouténos, sont trois (*Leo Diaconus*, VII,1). Le terme renforcé d'*autadelphos* "propre frère", comme celui de "frère selon la chair" (*a. sarkikos*, *Theophanes Cont.* p. 175, etc.), se développent chez nos auteurs et ailleurs, ce qui atteste l'importance prise par le lien fraternel, comme par sa métaphore. Cette dernière n'est pas seulement utilisée pour la fraternité monastique, et la fraternité volontaire, que nous évoquerons plus loin, mais couramment, dans les intimités laïques dont subsistent les témoignages épistolaires<sup>53</sup>). La fratrie au féminin transpose le mouvement dans son registre propre. Le Continuateur détaille les mariages des trois soeurs de Theodora, devenue l'épouse de l'empereur Théophile (*ibid.*, pp. 174-175). Ainsi, l'association père/fils ne semble pas revêtir dans la pratique une importance proportionnelle à celle de la filiation dans le système des noms: le père demeure avant tout une référence. Le bâtard n'est pas un personnage du récit. Le *parakoimomenos* Basile déjà cité, fils de Romain I<sup>e</sup> et d'une concubine (*pallaké*), a été castré, ce qui le plaçait dans une carrière politique au palais, mais prévenait aussi la naissance d'une lignée concurrente.

La stratégie aristocratique joue beaucoup de l'alliance, qui unit deux ou plusieurs hommes par le moyen d'une femme que le récit ne nomme pas, le plus souvent, sauf s'il s'agit de la famille impériale. Le rôle premier est ici celui du *gambros*, le "preneur de femme", époux de la fille (g. *epithyatri*) ou de la soeur (g. *ep'adelphé*). Son importance est attestée indirectement par la pratique des empereurs, qui évitent, semble-t-il, de s'en donner. Les cinq soeurs de Michel III sont envoyées au couvent après le meurtre de Theoktistos, le ministre de sa mère (*ibid.*, pp. 170 et 174). Les quatre filles de Basile I<sup>e</sup> subiront le même sort (*ibid.*, p. 264), et les cinq soeurs de Romain II, malgré leurs supplications (*ibid.*, p. 471). En revanche, le choix des *gambroi* de Romain Lekapenos est tout aussi éclairant. Le mariage de sa fille Hélène avec le jeune empereur a été le moyen d'une promotion décisive pour lui-même et ses fils, parce que Constantine VII est devenu leur *gambros* à tous. Une autre de ses filles, Agathé, épouse Romanos Argyros (*ibid.*, p. 399). Il se montre attentif aux "co-beaux-pères" (*sympentheroi*, terme inconnu de la langue antique) que lui valent les mariages de ses fils. Le bon usage de l'alliance apparaît dans l'épisode où Jean Garidas, nommé domestique des scholes, réclame une promotion pour le "frère de (sa) femme" (*gynaikadelphos*), Theodoros Zouphinezer: il "conclut une amitié" (*sympilliotheis*) avec Romain Lekapenos, appuyée sur un échange de serments, et les deux hommes décident que leur entente sera scellée par une "alliance matrimoniale" (*gamikon synallagma*, *ibid.*, p. 392)/ De la même manière, Andronikos Doukas avait eu l'appui de Gregoras Ibêritzès, son *sympentheros*, dans l'épisode déjà cité de son départ et de sa tentative sur le pouvoir. Mais Constantin VII bloque le mouvement à la génération suivante: il fait castrer le fils de Constantin Lekapenos, Romanos, lorsqu'on projette le trop beau mariage de celui-ci avec la fille de Jean Kourkouas (*ibid.*, p. 426). Plus tard, le progrès de l'aristocratie l'emporte sur l'immobilité voulue par les porphyrogénètes. La généalogie d'Alexis I<sup>e</sup>

Commène tracée par Nikephoros Bryennios, époux de sa fille Anne <sup>54</sup>), met en relief les gambroi, époux des soeurs d'Alexis ou des soeurs de sa femme. Le terme devient même un titre <sup>55</sup>), à cette époque où, comme l'a montré Kazhdan, la parentèle impériale constitue le groupe social le plus élevé.

L'alliance illégitime intervient pour sa part. C'est par elle que Michel III s'attache Basile, son favori et futur meurtrier. "Georges le Moine" rapport qu'il "unit" sa soeur Thekla, l'aînée sans doute (*ibid.*, p. 89 et *passim* la nomme la première) à Basile "pour qu'il l'eût à lui en particulier" (Georges Monachus, p. 738). Michel substitue aussi à l'épouse légitime de Basile sa propre concubine (pallakê), Eudokia fille d'Enger <sup>56</sup>), sur quoi est considéré comme sons "fils adoptif" (thetos hyios, Theophanes Cont. p. 208): choix déconcertant à première vue, mais que justifie l'impossibilité d'une relation d'égalité avec l'empereur; la paternité est la seule parenté volontaire possible ici <sup>57</sup>). Du reste, lorsque le même Basile, plus tard, apprend que Thekla vit avec Neatokomitês, il met bon ordre à une situation dangereuse, en faisant de ce dernier un moine, et en confisquant la fortune de Thekla (Georgius Monachus, p. 758). Alliance illégitime encore celle qui vaut à Zaoutzês le titre de basileopatôr de Léon VI, le même que le mariage de Constantin VII donnera à Romain Lekapenos, titre spécifique, dont P. Karlin-Hayter a montré le sens politiquement prégnant, pour lequel le simple "beau-père" (pentheros) n'eût pas suffi; mais je ne pense pas, au vu des exemples qui viennent d'être cités, que la légitimité de l'union fonde ici une différence <sup>58</sup>). Ce point semble attendre d'ailleurs une étude plus large. En revanche, ce qui apparaît clairement dans le récit historiographique, c'est l'action commune du gambros et des donneurs de femme, beaux-frères, et beau-père: Myron, beau-père (pentheros) de Petronas, frère de l'impératrice Theodora, est accusé d'aspirer à l'empire (*ibid.*, p. 705). Gregoras Ibêritzês, sympentheros d'Andronikos Doukas, parce que beau-père de son fils Constantin, joue dans la tentative des Doukai, au début du X<sup>e</sup> siècle, un rôle déjà mentionné. Le patrice Nikêtas aurait voulu pousser vers le trône son gendre, le basileus Christophoros Lekapenos, et il est en conséquence expulsé de la capitale et tondu, c'est-à-dire fait moine (Theophanes Cont. p. 417). On supposerait volontiers que les beaux-pères étaient plus jeunes que les pères, compte tenu de l'âge auquel on mariait les filles <sup>59</sup>), ce qui expliquerait leur activité.

L'oncle/la tante sont désignés en principe par le terme unique de theios/theia, mais la précision des côtés se rencontre au moins à la fin de l'Antiquité <sup>60</sup>) et se retrouve à l'occasion, particulièrement dans l'hagiographie <sup>61</sup>). L'importance concurrente des côtés de la parenté s'affirmera dans le cumul des noms lignagers à partir des Commènes. L'oncle joue un rôle qui n'est pas nouveau dans le recrutement monastique <sup>62</sup>). Théodore le Stoudite et son oncle maternel Platon <sup>63</sup>), Nicolas le Stoudite et son oncle paternel Théophane <sup>64</sup>), Michel Maleïnos et son impérial neveu, fils de soeur, Nicéphore II Phokas <sup>65</sup>) en sont des exemples. Si un dépouillement hagiographique complet attestait effectivement dans ce cas une fréquence plus grande de l'oncle maternel, celle-ci pourrait expliquer la moindre importance du frère d'épouse (gynaikadelphos) face à l'époux de soeur, que nous avons déjà constatée dans le récit historiographique. Le recrutement patriarcal atteste à la même époque un passage d'oncle paternel à neveu: Tarasios (784-806) est un "oncle paternel" (patrotheios) de Photios ou de son père <sup>66</sup>). Sergios, le moine "père spirituel" de Romain I<sup>e</sup>, est à son tour un "neveu" de Photios (anepsios, *ibid.*, p. 433).

Le vieux mot d'anepsios présente, au regard de la distinction française entre "cousin" et "neveu", une ambivalence qui remonte aux origines <sup>67</sup>). Au

surplus, dans le schéma canonique des degrés de parenté, Ego se trouve à la même distance de l'oncle/de la tante, et du fils/de la fille de frère/soeur. Cependant, il n'est pas indifférent socialement d'être ou non de la même génération, et ceci justifierait la vigueur concurrente du terme adelphidous "issu(e) de frère/soeur" que Procope utilise dans son Histoire Secrète: Germanos, cousin de Justinien, y est défini anepsios de celui-ci (V,8), et l'empereur lui-même adelphidous (VI, 19) de son oncle et prédécesseur Justin. Procope semble s'en tenir à cette répartition. Le droit canon a choisi pour sa part exadelphos dans son élaboration des interdits de mariage, au centre desquels se trouvent les "fils/filles de frère/soeur" au moins depuis le concile de 692. La terminologie suivit sans peine lorsque l'interdit s'étendit aux "petits-enfants ..." (disexadelphoi), puis aux "arrière-petits-enfants ..." (trisexadelphoi). La tension de l'usage courant et canonique demeure encore perceptible bien plus tard, liée peut-être à la valeur extensive de theios <sup>68</sup>). Notre historiographie tend à spécialiser anepsios pour le "neveu". Elle se limite pour les "cousins" aux termes primaires, exadelphos, adelphidous, tandis que le terme de syngênes suffit probablement à couvrir les cousinages plus éloignés <sup>69</sup>). L'historiographie des IX<sup>e</sup>-X<sup>e</sup> siècles n'atteste pas, en effet, de difficultés d'alliance comparables à celles que traite la jurisprudence civile et canonique à la fin de X<sup>e</sup> et au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle <sup>70</sup>). En tout état de cause, la recherche du gambros dans cette aristocratie en voie de constitution devait alors trouver un champ encore assez large. Les cousins des protagonistes passent dans le récit historiographique: le valeureux patrice Tiridate, exadelphos d'Artavasdos, le gambros de Léon III et de son fils (Theophanes, p. 418); Asyleôn, exadelphos de Basile, qui prend part au meurtre de Michel III (Georgius Monachus, p. 750); Michel, exadelphos de Constantin Doukas, qui l'accompagne dans sa tentative malheureuse contre le pouvoir (*ibid.* 801).

Restent enfin les parentés qui ne reposent ni sur la consanguinité ni sur l'alliance. La parenté par le baptême est une parenté vraie, puisqu'elle fonde des interdits de mariage, entre parrain et filleule depuis la législation de Justinien, entre compère et commère (synteknoi) depuis le concile de 692 <sup>71</sup>). Ce dernier obstacle est invoqué à l'encontre du mariage de Theophanê, veuve de Romain II, avec Nicéphore Phokas (*ibid.*, pp. 861-62; Skylitzês 261). Leur cas se situe en fait dans une pratique du compérage impérial comme lien privilégié avec une personnalité jugée importante. Léon V parraine le fils du futur Michel II, et instaure ainsi une "filiation" avec l'enfant (hyiopoïêsato, Genesios I, 11). Théophile parraine les enfants du domestique des scholes Manuel (Theophanes Cont. p. 120), tandis que son épouse Theodora aurait eu pour "compère" le patriarche iconoclaste Jannis <sup>72</sup>), et peut-être le logothète Theoktistos (Georgius Monachus, p. 718). Photios est le "compère" de Basile I<sup>e</sup> <sup>73</sup>). Le compérage impérial pouvait donc constituer une étape dans la marche vers le pouvoir, ou vers sa figure patriarcale. Peut-être faut-il apprécier en ce sens que la tradition historiographique hostile à Michel III le montre gaspillant le sien en faveur de fêtards obscurs (Theophanes Cont. p. 172; Skylitzês, pp. 96-97). L'historiographie ne nous apprend rien en revanche sur la pratique commune, fût-ce dans l'aristocratie. La filiation par le baptême, bien distinguée de l'adoption dans la loi et les canons, la concurrençait sans doute dans la pratique. L'historiographie ne dit rien à ce propos non plus, et à peine davantage sur la "fraternité volontaire" (adelphopofia), dont la répression occupe pourtant la pensée canonique. Le lien contracté par le futur Basile I<sup>e</sup>, encore inconnu, avec le fils de la veuve Danielis (Theophanes Cont. p. 228) constitue une exception peut-être significative, attestée dans une biographie impériale, mais située néanmoins en un lieu social périphérique. Enfin, la métaphore pénitentielle et monastique du "père", celle des moines

comme "fratrie" (adelphotês) ne peuvent qu'être signalées pour mémoire. Non que le "père spirituel" n'ait un rôle certain au palais et dans l'aristocratie, mais son étude déborderait notre présent propos.

Il faut conclure en effet. Et d'abord à l'originalité, à la nouveauté du développement byzantin à partir du VIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. De Constantin V à Basile II le miroir de l'historiographie montre les formes traditionnelles du pouvoir politique investies par des hommes appuyés sur leur parentèle, et dont les surnoms peu à peu transmissibles attestent l'origine non pas populaire, mais commune. C'est une aristocratie neuve qui se fraie ainsi un chemin dans l'histoire de Byzance, où elle n'avait pas de précédent, et où rien n'avait jamais ressemblé à la Rome des Anicii, même si la grandeur de ces derniers avait aussi touché Constantinople <sup>74</sup>). Les voies de l'ascension dans l'aristocratie, et jusqu'au faite impérial, sont alors pour beaucoup celles de la guerre. Si l'ascendance illustre constitue depuis toujours un élément obligé du discours d'éloge, sa portée politique devient alors beaucoup plus grande. On le voit aux versions contradictoires des origines de Basile I<sup>er</sup>, ou encore de Theophanê épouse de Romain II (Theophanes Cont., p. 458; Leo Diaconus, II, 10). La vérité généalogique viendra souvent rejoindre, au fil des générations, la règle rhétorique. Il reste qu le problème posé par l'historiographie n'est pas là. L'histoire elle-même n'a laissé passer jusqu'à nous que les récits centrés sur le pouvoir impérial. Ce dernier demeure ainsi le seul observatoire dont nous disposions pour découvrir l'aristocratie à laquelle il donnait un principe d'organisation sociale et une finalité idéologique.

Faut-il faire place dans sa genèse à une influence venue des pays caucasiens avec leurs soldats d'aventure? <sup>75</sup>). Comment comparer avec les Occidents de la même période? Enfin, que se passera-t-il à Byzance au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, et surtout à partir des Commènes? L'étude des parentèles impériales, dans tout leur développement, est sans doute, pour suivre une fois encore Kazhdan, la meilleure ouverture à ces questions.

\* Abréviations des titres des textes cités ci-dessus

|                   |                                                                                                              |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Genesios          | <u>Josephii Genesii Regum Libri, Quattor</u> , éd. A. Lesmueller-Werner et I. Thurn (Berlin/New York, 1978). |
| Georgius Monachus | <u>Georgii Monachi dicti Hamartoli Chronicon</u> , éd. E. de Murali (St. Pétersbourg, 1859)                  |
| Leo Diaconus      | <u>Leonis Diaconi Historiae</u> , éd. C.B. Hase (Bonn, 1828).                                                |
| Procopius         | <u>Procopius, Historia Arcana</u> , éd. J. Haury, rev. G. Wirth (Leipzig, 1963).                             |
| Skylitzes         | <u>Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum</u> , éd. I. Thurn (Berlin/New York, 1973).                        |
| Theophanes        | <u>Theophanis Chronographia</u> , tom I, éd. C. De Boor (Leipzig, 1883).                                     |
| Theophanes Cont.  | <u>Theophanes Continuatis</u> , éd. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1838).                                                  |

## ENDNOTES

1. Positions de problèmes et indications de méthode: G. Duby, 'La noblesse dans la France médiévale. Une enquête à poursuivre', dans G. Duby, Hommes et structures du moyen âge (Paris/La Haye, 1973), pp. 145-66; T. Reuter (ed.), The Medieval Nobility. Studies in the Ruling Classes of France and Germany from the sixth to the twelfth centuries (North Holland, 1978), notamment, L. Génicot, 'Les recherches à la noblesse médiévale' (1975), pp. 17-35; G. Tellenbach, 'Zur Erforschung des hochmittelalterlichen Adels (9-12 Jh.)', XII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international des sciences historiques (Vienne, 1965), I, pp. 318-37; K.F. Werner, 'Adel. Fränkisches Reich, Imperium, Frankreich', dans Lexicon des Mittelalters, I, 1 (Zürich/München, 1977), cc. 120-8.
2. Sur cette définition héritée de Marc Bloch, cf. Ph. Contamine (éd.), La noblesse au moyen âge, XI<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècles. Essais à la mémoire de Robert Boutruche (Paris, 1976), pp. 19-35; G. Tabacco, 'Su nobiltà e cavalleria nel medioevo. Un ritorno a Marc Bloch', Rivista storica Italiana, 91,1 (1979), pp. 5-25.
3. H.G. Beck, 'Byzantinisches Gefolgschaftswesen', dans H.G. Beck, Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz (London, 1972), XI; G. Ostrogorsky, 'Observations on the Aristocracy in Byzantium', DOP 25(1971), pp. 3-32 (en dernier lieu). R. Guiland, 'La noblesse byzantine. Remarques', REB 24(1966), pp. 40-57, posait la question à partir des titres et d'une conception quelque peu anachronique de la noblesse. Les données seraient tout autres à partir du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle, cf. D. Jacoby, 'Les archontes grecs et la féodalité en Morée franque', TM 2(1967), pp. 421-65, reproduit dans D. Jacoby, Société et démographie à Byzance et en Romanie latine (London, 1975), VI; D. Jacoby, 'The Encounter of Two Societies: Western Conquerors and Byzantines in the Peloponnesus after the Fourth Crusade', AHR 78(1973), pp. 873-906, reproduit dans D. Jacoby, Recherches sur la Méditerranée orientale du XII<sup>e</sup> au XVe siècle (London, 1979), II; A. Laiou, 'The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Palaeologan period: a story of arrested development', Viator, 4(1973), pp. 134-51. Rappelons aussi les suggestions d'A.A. Vasiliev, 'On the question of Byzantine feudalism', B 8 (1933), pp. 584-604.
4. Cf. G. Duby et J. Le Goff (éds.), Famille et parenté dans l'Occident médiéval (Ecole française de Rome, 1977); D. Bullough, 'Early Medieval Social Groupings: the terminology of kinship', Past and Present, 45 (November 1969), pp. 3-18. Bibliographie récente rassemblée par A. Guerreau-Jalabert, 'Sur les structures de parenté dans l'Europe médiévale', Annales ESC, 36(1981), pp. 1028-49.
5. A.P. Kazhdan, 'Ob aristokratizatsij vizantijskogo obshchestva VIII-XII vv.', ZRVI 11(1968), pp. 47-53.
6. A.P. Kazhdan, 'Kharakter, sostav i evoljutsija gospodstvujshego klassa v Vizantij XI-XII vv. Predvaritel'nyje vyvody', BZ 66 (1973), pp. 47-60; A.P. Kazhdan, Sotsial'nyj sostav gospodstvujshego klassa Vizantii XI-XII vv. (Moscou, 1974). Cf. l'analyse d'I. Sorlin dans TM 6(1976), pp. 367-80.



7. Présentation générale par H. Hunger, Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner, I (Münich, 1978), notamment, pp. 331-441.
8. Bibliographie dans Kazhdan, Sostav, pp. 88-101. Ajouter W. Seibt, Die Skleroi. Eine prosopographisch-sigillographische Studie (Vienne, 1976); N.M. Panagiotakis, 'Hé byzantiné oikogeneia tôn Plevstôn. Symbolê sta genealogika tôn Phôkadôn', Dôdôê, 1(1972), pp. 245-64.
9. Voir notamment P.J. Alexander, 'Secular Biography at Byzantium', Speculum, 15(1940), pp. 194-209, reproduit dans P.J. Alexander, Religious and Political History in the Byzantine Empire (London, 1978), I; A.P. Kazhdan, 'Iz istorij vizantijskoj khronografij X veka. 2. Istotchniki L'va Djakona i Skilitsy dlja istorij tret'ej tchetverti X stoletija', VV 20(1961), pp. 106-28; P. Karlin-Hayter, 'Etudes sur les deux histoires du règne de Michel III', B 41(1971), pp. 452-96, reproduit dans P. Karlin-Hayter, Studies in Byzantine Political History. Sources and Controversies (London, 1981), IV; A. Markopoulos, 'Le témoignage du Vaticanus Gr. 163 pour la période entre 945-963', Symmeikta, 3(1979), pp. 83-119. Voir aussi F.H. Tinnefeld, Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der byzantinischen Historiographie (Münich, 1971).
10. Sur les sources constantinopolitaines utilisées par Théophane pour les VII<sup>e</sup> et VIII<sup>e</sup> siècles, cf. A.S. Proudfoot, 'The Sources of Theophanes for the Heraclian Dynasty', B 44(1974), pp. 367-439.
11. E. Patlagean, 'Familles chrétiennes d'Asie Mineure et histoire démographique du IV<sup>e</sup> siècle', dans E. Patlagean, Structure sociale, famille, chrétienté à Byzance, IV<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècles (London, 1981), IX.
12. J. et P. Zepos, Ius graecoromanum, IV (Athens, 1931), pp. 11-260. Cf. G. Weiss, 'Hohe Richter in Konstantinopel. Eustathios Rhomaïos und seine Kollegen', JOB 22 (1973), pp. 117-43.
13. H. Moritz, Die Zuname bei den byzantinischen Historikern und Chronisten (Landshut, 1897-98), 2 tomes.
14. Cf. L'onomastique latine - Colloque international du CNRS 1975 (Paris, 1977), notamment I Kajanto, 'The emergence of the late single name system', pp. 421-28. Nombreux travaux de L. Robert, notamment Noms indigènes dans l'Asie Mineure gréco-romaine, 1<sup>e</sup> partie (Paris, 1963);
15. K.F. Werner, 'Liens de parenté et noms de personne. Un problème historique et méthodologique', dans Duby et Le Goff, Famille et parenté, pp. 13-18, 25-34. Cf. K.F. Werner et M. Heinzelmann, 'Les changements de la dénomination latine à la fin de l'Antiquité', ibid., pp. 19-24. Voir aussi P. Toubert, Les structures du Latium médiéval. Le Latium méridional et la Sabine du IX<sup>e</sup> siècle à la fin du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Paris, 1973), pp. 693-703.
16. F. Zonabend, 'Jeux de noms. Les noms de personne à Minot', Etudes rurales, 74(1979), pp. 51-85; id., 'Le nom de personne', L'Homme, 20/4 (1980), pp. 7-23; C. Severi, 'Le nom de lignée. Les sobriquets dans un village d'Emilie', ibid., pp. 105-118.

17. S.D. Goitein, A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as portrayed in the documents of the Cairo Geniza, III - The Family (Berkeley, 1978), pp. 1-15, 314-19.
18. Patlagean, Structure sociale, IX, p. 175 et n.32; J.G. Keenan, 'The names Flavius and Aurelius as status designations in Later Roman Egypt', Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphie, 11 (1973), pp.33-63; 12(1974), pp.283-304.
19. Cf. R. Hirzel, 'Der Name. Ein Beitrag zu seiner Geschichte im Altertum und besonders bei den Griechen', Abhandlungen der sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 36(1927); G.J.N. Bartelink, 'Sur les allusions aux noms propres chez les auteurs grecs chrétiens', Vigiliae Christianae, 15(1961), pp.32-39. Par exemple l'épouse de Justin Ier change son nom 'ridicule' de Lupicina pour celui d'Euphemia: Procopius, Historia Arcana, IX, 49.
20. Germanos 'cousin' de Justinien et Joannis 'neveu' de Vitalien: Procopius, Historia Arcana, V, 8 et s. Justinien 'neveu de Justin'; ibid., VI, 19. Sur les termes grecs, cf. ci-dessous pp. 34-35.
21. Pour les niveaux de langue, qui joueront un rôle dans la suite de notre exposé, nous renvoyons une fois pour toutes à R. Browning, Medieval and Modern Greek (London, 1969). Notre interprétation des sur-noms se fonde sur le Mega Lexikon tês hellenikês glôssês de Dimitrakos.
22. Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, III (Manchester, 1931), index s.v. 'Zunamen': p.e. Joannis, fabricant de bouteilles, dit l'Empoisonneur (Pharmakos) - no.136; Georges fils de Priskos, marchand de vin, dit Pas-de-parole (Dikha horkou) - no.282.
23. Cf. Werner dans Duby et Le Goff, Famille et parenté, pp. 13-18, 25-34; id., 'Important Noble Families in the Kingdom of Charlemagne - a prosopographical study of the relationship between king and nobility in the early middle ages', dans Reuter, Medieval Nobility, pp.137-202.
24. Cf. la méthode proposée par H. Neveux, 'Les prénoms masculins à Caen (1568-1775)', Annales de Normandie, 31/2(1981), pp.115-45.
25. Actes de Lavra I (Archives de l'Athos V) (Paris, 1970), no.6.
26. Methodii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani Vita Sancti Theophanis Confessoris, éd. V.V. Latyshev dans Zapiski russijskoj Akademii Nauk po istor.-filol. otdeljeniju, 8e ser., 13/4(1918), pp.1-40. Voir notamment ch. 4-5, 6, 20. Sur les noms féminins en -ô, Robert, Noms indigènes, Passim.
27. Vie et office de Saint Euthyme le Jeune, éd. L. Petit dans Revue de l'Orient Chrétien, 8(1903), pp.155-205, 503-36. Voir notamment ch. 3, 5, 6, 8.
28. Des Klerikers Gregorios Bericht über Leben, Wunderthaten und Translation der Metaphrase der Hl. Theodora von Thessalonich des Joannes Staurakios, éd. F. Kurtz dans Zapiski russijskoj Akademii Nauk po istor.-filol. otdeljeniju, 8e ser., 6/1(1902), pp.1-49. Voir ch. 6.

29. Vita Euthymii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani, éd. P. Karlin-Hayter (Bruxelles, 1970), p.133.
30. Ed. I. Van den Gheyn dans AB 16(1897), pp.142-63. Voir ch. 4.
31. Cf. E. Patlagean, 'Sainteté et pouvoir', dans S. Hackel (ed.), The Byzantine Saint (London, 1981), notamment pp.102-4.
32. Cf. G. Moravcsik, Byzantinoturcica, 2e éd (Berlin, 1958), II, p.93.
33. A.P. Kazhdan, 'Ob aristokratizatsii vizantijskogo obshchestva', ZRVI 11(1968), pp. 47-53.
34. Pour tout ce qui suit, voir A. Mirambel, Grammaire du grec moderne (Paris, 1949), pp. 205-15.
35. Pour les Arméniens, cf. P. Charanis, The Armenians in the Byzantine Empire (Lisbon, 1963), reproduit dans P. Charanis, Studies on the Demography of the Byzantine Empire (London, 1972), V.
36. Kolōniatēs: Theophanes Continuatus, p.71; Tripolitēs; ibid., p. 366; p.366; 'surgeon de cette ville impériale': ibid., p.154.
37. Hellade: ibid., p.357.
38. R. Janin, Constantinople byzantine, 2e éd. (Paris, 1964), p.375.
39. Ed. M. H. Fourmy et M. Leroy dans B 9(1934), pp.85-170.
40. W.Seibt, Die Skleroi, p.20.
41. S. Runciman, The Emperor Romanus Lecapenus and his reign. A Study of tenth century Byzantium (Cambridge, 1963), p.63, n.1.
42. G. Dagron et J. Paramelle, 'Un texte patriographique. Le 'récit merveilleux, très beau et profitable sur la colonne du Xērolophos' (Vindob. Suppl. Gr. 172, fol. 43<sup>v</sup>-63<sup>v</sup>)', TM 7(1979), p.518, 11.207 ss.
43. Leo Diaconus (Bonn), p.112 et s.
44. Cf. L. Robert, 'Noms de métiers dans les documents byzantins', dans Kharisterion eis A. Orlandon (Athènes, 1964), I, pp.324-347; O. Masson, 'Quelques noms de métiers grecs en -ās et les noms grecs correspondants', Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphie, 11(1973), pp. 1-19. Le procédé est bien compris par les contemporains, témoin le partisan de Bardas Phokas, Symeōn "paysan cultivateur de vignes qui tira son sur-nom de son métier, et fut appelé Ampelas", comme explique Léon Diacre (VII, 1), qui souligne qu'il était "issu de gens obscurs, sans naissance", et se distinguait par sa vaillance et la force de ses mains. Léon Diacre lui-même l'appelle désormais Ampelas Symeōn (VII, 5).
45. A.P. Kazhdan, Armiane v sostave gosподstvujushchego klassa vizantijskoj imperij v XI-XII vv. (Erevan, 1975). Cf. J. Laurent, L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam depuis la conquête arabe jusqu'en 886 (Paris, 1919).

49. Vita Euthymii, ed. Karlin-Hayter, p.49.
50. Une étude de l'"amitié" byzantine ferait encore son profit des observations d'E. Benveniste, Le vocabulaire des institutions européennes: I- Economie, parenté, société (Paris, 1969), pp. 335-353. L'"entente amicale" est aussi bien celle d'une manoeuvre politique (Theophanes Continuatus (Bonn) p.393, avec serments) que celle d'une liaison amoureuse publique (ibid., p.357). Sur les "hommes", cf. V. Arutjunova, 'K voprosu ob "anthropoi" v tipike Grigorija Pakurjana', VV 29(1968), pp. 63-76; cf. aussi J. Verpeaux, 'Les oikeioi. Notes d'histoire institutionnelle et sociale', REB 23(1965), pp. 89-99.
51. Cf. P. Karlin-Hayter, 'The Revolt of Andronicus Doucas', BS 27(1966), pp.23-25, reproduit dans P. Karlin-Hayter, Studies in Byzantine Political History (London, 1981), VI.
52. Cf. J. Dauvillier et C. de Clerq, Le mariage en droit canonique oriental (Paris, 1936); E. Patlagean, 'Une représentation byzantine de la parenté et ses origines occidentales', L'Homme, 6/4(1966), pp. 59-83, reproduit dans Patlagean, Structure sociale, VII.
53. J. Darrouzès, Epistoliers byzantins du Xe siècle (Paris, 1960), passim.
54. Nicéphore Bryennios, Histoire, ed. P. Gautier (Berlin/New York, 1975), p. 75 et s.
55. L. Stiernon, 'Notes de titulature et de prosopographie byzantines. Sébaste et gambros', REB 23(1965), pp.222-244.
56. Cf. C. Mango, 'Eudocia Ingerina, the Normans and the Macedonian Dynasty', ZRVI 14-15(1973), pp.17-17.
57. Voir F. Dölger, Byzanz und die europäische Staatenwelt (Ettal, 1953), pp. 34-69, 183-96; K. Hauck, 'Formes de parenté artificielle dans le haut moyen âge', dans Duby et Le Goff, Famille et parenté, pp. 43-61.
58. Cf. A. Leroy-Molinghen et P. Karlin-Hayter, 'Basileopator', B 38(1968), pp. 278-81.
59. Cf. E. Patlagean, 'L'enfant et son avenir dans la famille byzantine (IV<sup>e</sup>-II<sup>e</sup> siècles)', dans E. Patlagean, Structure sociale, X, pp.85-93.
60. P. ex. theios pros métros: Libanios, Discours, éd. J. Martin, tr. P. Petit (Paris, 1979), I, 1, v.; theios pros patros/pros métros: Theophilus Antecessor, ed. C. Ferrini (Berlin, 1884), pp.289-90, passim.
61. P. ex. métradelphos: Vie d'Evstratios, higoumène du monastère d'Abgar, éd. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus dans Analecta hierosolymitikés stakhyologias, 4(1897), pp.367-400 (ch. 4); ek patros theios: pros métros theios: Vie d'Irène, abbesse de Chrysobalanton dans AASS, Julii VI, pp.602-34 (ch. 6).



62. Exemples des Ve-VIIe siècles: Vie De Nicolas Stoudite dans Migne, PG 105, c. 869; Théodoret de Cyr, Histoire Philothée - 4: Histoire des moines de Syrie, éd. P. Canivet et A. Leroy-Molinghen (Sources chrétiennes, 234) (Paris, 1977), p.294; Vie de Nicolas de Sion, éd. G. Anrich, Hagios Nikolaos (Berlin, 1913), I, pp.3-35 (ch. 2); Vie de Georges de Choziba, éd. C. Houze dans AB 7(1888), pp. 97-144, 336-59 (ch. 2). Cf. J. Bremmer, 'Avunculate and fosterage', Journal of Indo-European Studies, 4(1976), pp.65-78.
63. Pros mētros theios: Vie de Theodore Stoudite dans Migne, PG 99, col. 121.
64. Ek patros theios: Vie de Nicolas Stoudite dans Migne, PG 105, col. 869.
65. Vie de Saint Michel Maleinos, éd. L. Petit dans Revue de l'Orient chrétien, 7(1902), pp.549-68 (voir ch. 3).
66. Photius, Epistulae, I, 2 dans Migne, PG 102, col. 609B. Cf. H. Ahrweiler, 'Sur la carrière de Photius avant son patriarcat', BZ 58(1965), pp.348-63; C. Mango, 'The Liquidation of Iconoclasm and the Patriarch Photios', dans A. Bryer & J. Herrin (eds), Iconoclasm (Birmingham, 1977) pp.133-40.
67. Cf. Benveniste, Vocabulaire des institutions européennes, I, p.234.
68. Cf. J. Darrouzès, 'Questions de droit matrimonial: 1172-1175', REB 35(1977), pp.107-57, notamment pp.144-5; St. Binon, 'A propos d'un prostagma d'Andronic III Paléologue', BZ 38(1938), pp.133-55; 377-407.
69. L'interférence entre 'cousin' et 'parent' apparaît par exemple dans la Vie d'Evariste le Stoudite, mort en 897, éd. C. Van der Vorst dans AB 41(1923), pp.295-325. A la recherche d'une protection dans la capitale, le jeune homme se définit comme 'parent (syngenês) selon la chair' de Bryennios, et comme 'cousin' (exadelphidous) de l'épouse de celui-ci (voir p.300).
70. Crumel, Régestes, no. 804 et s.; A. Schminck, 'Vier eherechtliche Entscheidungen aus dem 11. Jh.', dans D. Simon (éd.), Fontes Minores, 3(1979), pp.221-79.
71. Codex Justinianus, ed. P. Krüger (Berlin, 1877), V, iv, 26, 2; concile de 692, anon. 53: ed. F. Lauchert, Die Kanones der wichtigsten altkirchlichen Concilien nebst den apostolischen Kanones (Fribourg/Leipzig, 1896), p.123.
72. Symeon Magister (Bonn), p.647.
73. Photius, Epistulae, I, 16 dans Migne, PG 102, col. 772A.
74. A. Momigliano, 'Gli Anicii e la storiografia latina del VI secolo d.C.', dans A. Momigliano, Secondo contributo alla storia degli studi classici (Rome, 1960), pp.231-52; L. Cracco Ruggini, 'Nobiltà romana e potere nell'età di Boezio', Atti del congresso internazionale di studi boeziani (Rome, 1981), pp.73-96. Cf. Ch. Pietri, 'Aristocratie et

société cléricale dans l'Italie chrétienne au temps d'Odoacre et de Théodoric', Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome - Antiquité, 93/1(1981), pp.415-67.

75. Cf. C. Tomanoff, 'The Background to Mantzikert', dans Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies (Oxford, 1967), pp.411-26.

### CHAPTER 3 - THE ARISTOCRACY AND THE IMPERIAL IDEAL

Alexander Kazhdan

Of those literary works, which aim at conjuring up the ideal image of the Byzantine emperor, at least three are connected, in one way or another, with the name of Basil I (867-86). The first is a sort of 'Mirror of the Prince' entitled Hortatory Chapters by Basil the Emperor of the Rhomaiot. There are some doubts as to whether it was really Basil's work,<sup>1</sup> but the arguments are not weighty enough to reject the manuscript tradition. The question of whether Photius should be regarded as its author is irrelevant to our purpose: the work is, after all, considered as a creation of the second half of the ninth century.

These Chapters are consistently traditional both in outlook and in content. The author, whoever he may have been, repeats ancient maxims and constantly refers to the Wisdom of Solomon, the (Pseudo-) Isocrates, and Ecclesiasticus.<sup>2</sup> The text is obviously christian: both imperial power and imperial victories are regarded as proceeding from God, and the beauty of the soul is proclaimed as being of higher value than corporeal beauty.<sup>3</sup> The list of imperial virtues includes righteousness or justice,<sup>4</sup> philanthropy,<sup>5</sup> generosity,<sup>6</sup> chastity,<sup>7</sup> love of truth,<sup>8</sup> and intelligence.<sup>9</sup> More specifically, the author emphasizes respect for knowledge<sup>10</sup> and several times expresses his concern with good counsellors<sup>11</sup> and genuine friends.<sup>12</sup> In no case is the emperor eulogized as a warrior; rather he is the peacemaker<sup>13</sup> - the same term, eirenopoios, is applied to Basil in the title of the Epanagoge,<sup>14</sup> though in the earlier Procheiron he is called victorious and triumphant.<sup>15</sup>

Nor is the emperor placed at the head of an aristocracy. 'Do not brag', warns the author, 'about the nobility (eugeneia) of the body, nor be scornful of low birth (dysgeneia); do not honour beauty, nor turn aside from ugliness, but look at the beauty of the soul and be loving of the soul.'<sup>16</sup> And again: 'Do not respect and admit those who are noble (eugeneis) because of their body, but those who are dear because of their spirit.'<sup>17</sup> And he further explains that the horse's nobility consists in its magnificent stature, that of a dog in its hunting qualities,<sup>18</sup> while man's nobility is determined by the virtues of his soul.<sup>19</sup>

These formulae are vague enough, but fortunately we possess a contemporary source, the Taktika of Leo VI (886-912), Basil I's son and successor and, allegedly, the addressee of the Chapters. The emperor recommended in his Taktika that nobility should not be assessed according to one's ancestors, but according to one's own achievements. The author even asserts that generals who do not have glorious ancestors serve better, since they are eager to compensate

by their own deeds for their humble birth.<sup>19</sup> The idea of nobility has already been born, but there remained strong reservations as to whether noble origin could be considered a desirable virtue.

Leo VI was probably the author of a speech dedicated to the memory of his parents, the Emperor Basil I and Eudocia Ingerina. The author expressly states that his portrayal of Basil is conceived as a paradigm (*ton archetypon hypodeigma*).<sup>20</sup> Among his ideal qualities we re-encounter those same virtues that are listed in the Chapters: beauty of soul, imperial intelligence, philanthropy, righteousness, and protection of the poor.<sup>21</sup> Leo certainly mentions his father's military successes and the trophies he had exacted after his victories over the Saracens in the East and West,<sup>22</sup> but nothing is said about Basil's own fortitude: only that he transformed cowardice, a disease that had been ravaging the army, into courage, for being a wise physician of the soul and body he cured the worst ailments - sloth and idleness.<sup>23</sup> The meaning of a second passage, which might have related to this subject, requires elucidation. Leo affirmed that his father "stretched out his arms across whole regions of the earth and warded off the *biaiotatoi* from every side."<sup>24</sup> The editors took *biaiotatoi* to mean "enemies" and rendered the sentence as follows: "repoussa de toutes parts les ennemis les plus violents." The *biaiotatoi* are, however, the unjust "powerful" rather than enemies, and the sentence in question seems to refer to Basil's domestic policies and his concern for the oppressed.

Leo considered that his father's origin was a separate topic. He touched upon it briefly, so that he could not be accused of ignoring the rules of panegyric, which demanded the presentation of the hero's fatherland and lineage.<sup>25</sup> But he insisted that in his father's case this tradition was of little value.<sup>26</sup> Though alluding to the semi-official, but quite legendary, version of Basil's origin with the Arsacids and Artaxerxes,<sup>27</sup> he placed his main emphasis, not on his father's family, but on his personal qualities. For Leo a humble man was embellished by his own deeds, while a noble had, of necessity, to bask in inherited glory.<sup>28</sup> He quoted "a wise man" who believed that it was better to establish a noble family than to refer to some ancestor.<sup>29</sup> Basil might not have come from imperial stock, but he acquired enough glory to make himself famous; even if he did not originate "with the sceptres", he inherited abundant glory from his family.<sup>30</sup>

The main ideas revealed in Leo's speech were eventually developed in the detailed biography of Basil I produced either by the emperor's grandson, Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913-59), or by somebody of Constantine's milieu. In it we find a traditional list of imperial virtues, which includes piety, reverence towards one's parents, sympathy with the poor, chastity, fortitude, impartiality, and intelligence.<sup>31</sup> In still more traditional vein Constantine goes on to enumerate "the quartet of virtues" possessed by Basil: fortitude and intelligence, chastity and righteousness.<sup>32</sup> He then reiterates piety and reverence (this time towards priests and monks), sympathy with the poor, righteousness and impartiality.<sup>33</sup> Where Constantine is more specific, he is usually repeating statements taken from Leo's panegyric. Basil toiled day and night, striving to the best of his abilities to see to the welfare of his subjects; he promoted the best to the highest positions; he maintained

righteousness and impartiality and did not permit the powerful to oppress the poor, so that "Briareos's hands", stretched out to seize the property of others, grew numb; and the feeble limbs of the poor were strengthened. Everyone worked his own plot of earth and harvested his vineyard, having no fear of losing his father's olive-tree or fig-tree.<sup>34</sup> The emperor presided in person over the *Genikon*, the chief treasury; he brought peace to the Church, and "cleansed" the laws.<sup>35</sup>

Basil's own military achievements are never mentioned in his biography. His grandson rather vaguely affirms that Basil extended the frontiers of the Empire through his own efforts, manliness (*andria*), and lofty spirit (*gennaiotes*).<sup>36</sup> But he ascribes this to successful administration rather than to command on the battlefield: his grandfather drew up lists of soldiers, paid their wages, trained them and polished their military skills.<sup>37</sup> His expeditions turned out to be less successful: the siege of Tephrike was a failure;<sup>38</sup> so was his first attack against Melitene.<sup>39</sup> The only "martial" episode in his grandfather's life, which Constantine dwells upon, is the crossing of the Euphrates. Here the emperor distinguished himself by carrying a load three times heavier than that of the ordinary soldier.<sup>40</sup> There is a detailed account of the victory over the Paulicians at the Bathryyax,<sup>41</sup> but that was a battle in which Basil did not participate.

Constantine repeats the story of Basil's Arsacid origin, but does not stress his grandfather's noble origins. This theme is apparently secondary to the exercise of impartiality and the protection of the poor. Thus we can sum up and surmise that from the turn of the ninth century on, when these three works are supposed to have been written, the traditional quartet of imperial virtues, combined with the idea of christian piety, constituted the core of the imperial ideal. Military prowess and noble origin, on the other hand, either remained in the background or were completely rejected. A rather different approach prevailed, as we shall see, in works of the late eleventh century.

In Michael Attaleiates's paradigm of imperial virtue we find, besides traditional elements, such as philanthropy, righteousness, generosity, piety, and intelligence, two other qualities singled out - nobility of birth and military prowess.<sup>42</sup> His ideal was Nicephorus III Botaneiates (1078-81), allegedly a descendant of the Phokas family, who in their turn could apparently trace their origins to the famous Fabii. Botaneiates is presented as impeccably noble, heir of a glorious lineage; he could count among his ancestors the Scipiones and Aemilius Paulus, and, passing from legend to recent history, could look to the distinguished deeds of his father and grandfather. Everybody, Attaleiates insists, was overcome with love for their new sovereign when they learnt of his glory in battle and of his valour, which matched his nobility, for not one major war had been fought without his personal participation. The historian constantly returns to his hero's military achievements: for eleven days and nights he and his men held off the advancing Petcheneks - a feat not equalled by any other Roman or "Persian" in ancient times or modern. At the decisive battle near Nicaea, during the civil war of 1057, he distinguished himself above all others. In 1064 he bravely resisted the Uzes in their crossing of the Danube. The list of his heroic deeds

could easily be extended.

A younger contemporary of Attaleiates, Theophylact, the future archbishop of Ohrid, puts military prowess at the top of his list of virtues for a ruler. 'Do not imagine', he warns his young pupil Constantine Doukas, who had been chosen by Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118) as his heir, 'that you can make the servants of Ares obey you, if they see you decked in gold and purple, rather than in the armour of a general'.<sup>43</sup> Constantine is praised for his skill in riding a horse, throwing a javelin, and as a mounted archer. He trained himself by running and hunting.<sup>44</sup> Piety is, of course, present in Theophylact's list of ideal qualities.<sup>45</sup> Otherwise, only philanthropy is included from the list of traditional virtues.<sup>46</sup>

According to Theophylact, the emperor should not permit himself to be obsessed by the pursuit of pleasure;<sup>47</sup> he should not strive to gain power by force nor stain his robe with blood<sup>48</sup> (an allusion to Alexius I's ascent to the throne?); he should repel buffoons<sup>49</sup> and support his true friends, for an emperor, who relies upon himself alone, will always be isolated. He needs the support of friends. They should be allowed to introduce measures that are for the benefit of the Empire, even if it means that they have to follow the example of a good surgeon and cut and cauterize what is rotten.<sup>50</sup> For Theophylact noble birth is another undeniable virtue. He praises Constantine's mother, the Empress Maria of Alania, for her noble lineage: not only did her parents, her grandparents and her great-grandparents obtain glorious positions, but 'thousands upon thousands' of her ancestors were kings!<sup>51</sup>

These principles were accepted and developed by the authors of the twelfth century. Theodore Prodromos is well known as a panegyrist of the Emperor John II Comnenus (1118-43) and his son Manuel I (1143-80). Wolfram Hürandner has drawn up a list of the ideal imperial qualities described by the twelfth-century poet.<sup>52</sup> The pious imitation of God occupies a leading place in the Prodromic eulogy, but little attention is paid to the traditional virtues of the Byzantine emperor: philanthropy alone is occasionally mentioned. The emperor is mostly praised as a warrior and as a victor in battle, as a skilful hunter and as a saviour - the sun, whose light not only warms and heals, but can also blind and burn any adversary. According to Prodromos, Manuel lived day and night in his armour for the sake of his subjects, withstanding thirst, cold and thunderstorms.<sup>53</sup>

Kinnamos is another author, who lays special emphasis upon Manuel's valour. He notes how astonished the 'Persians' were by his bravery.<sup>54</sup> In battle he brought down many 'Persian' warriors and drove others to flight.<sup>55</sup> Brandishing his spear he rushed against the 'Scythians', killing them two at a time.<sup>56</sup> He dispersed a Saracen army, littering the whole valley with corpses.<sup>57</sup> Thousands, tens of thousands, of the enemy surrendered or retired before his attack.<sup>58</sup> He was the first across the Danube and even attempted to scale the walls of Zemlin.<sup>59</sup> He never tired in combat and resembled the mightiest heroes in his use of arms and in his skill as a horseman.<sup>60</sup> He was ever ready to help his brothers-in-arms. During the crossing of the Danube a boat was damaged and began to sink. The emperor immediately jumped into the water and, disregarding the waves, supported the vessel on his shoulders until the crew were saved.<sup>61</sup> His

strength was truly miraculous: clad in a heavy mail coat he could not only dismount with ease, but also leap into the saddle with a single bound.<sup>62</sup> A brave hunter, he stalked the bear and the wild boar with his spear.<sup>63</sup> Once he even managed to kill a monster, a cross between a lion and a leopard, at the sight of which all the emperor's companions had fled in terror.<sup>64</sup>

Eustathios of Thessalonica<sup>65</sup> conjures up a similar paragon. His Manuel is an ideal 'knight' who scorned danger and took greater pride in his wounds than in the glitter of his diadem.<sup>66</sup> He slept little, ate sparingly, liked walking, endured extremes of heat and cold with ease,<sup>67</sup> and excelled all in steadfastness.<sup>68</sup> Manuel's noble birth was his adornment. Eustathios eulogizes the ancestors of Manuel - those roots which produced such a beautiful bloom.<sup>69</sup> Manuel's brilliant deeds vie with those of his forefathers.<sup>70</sup> From the very cradle he aspired to the highest virtues, following in the path of his ancestors and inspired by his father's example.<sup>71</sup> Likewise, Eustathios saw Manuel's qualities reflected in his son, the young emperor Alexius II (1180-83).<sup>72</sup> In contrast, he was shocked that the Emperor Andronikos I (1183-85), a man of noble family, who had received divine assistance in his ascent to the throne, could act with such tyrannical cruelty.<sup>73</sup>

We can conclude that Byzantine political thought around the year 900 had considerable reservations about 'chivalrous' virtues, such as military prowess and noble birth: these had still to acquire a proper place in the list of imperial qualities next to piety and traditional Graeco-Roman values. This, as we have seen, had occurred by the turn of the eleventh century. Can we find out more precisely when this substantial shift took place?

At first sight, this change might well be connected with the image of Nicephorus Phokas (963-69). In his final characterization of this emperor, Leo the Deacon makes great play with his qualities as a warrior: Nicephorus outdid all his contemporaries in manliness and physical strength; he was highly experienced and energetic in war; he was able to endure any kind of hard work, nor was he willing to give himself up to pleasure.<sup>74</sup> Only after this enumeration of his military qualities does Leo introduce the emperor's 'civilian' virtues: he was a high-minded and noble statesman, a righteous judge, and a steadfast legislator; he was, of course, constant in his prayers and vigils.<sup>75</sup> In the foreground of Leo's narrative are placed Nicephorus's triumphs: the emperor was invincible in battle and easily subdued his enemies, as though aided by God, so that all the tribes trembled before him and longed to have him as a friend and a lord, not as a foe.<sup>76</sup> He had always been victorious. When it so happened that he failed to seize Tarsus at the first blow, he was mightily vexed, for previously, when only Domestic of Schools, he had ruined and plundered thousands of towns, captured rich lands and turned warlike tribes to flight, but now that he had assumed the imperial office, he was driven away from the walls of Tarsus.<sup>77</sup> In the face of adversity Nicephorus behaved and thought differently from Basil I - as presented by his grandson: Constantine Porphyrogenitus's Basil calmly accepted his failure to capture enemy strongholds.

Leo's contemporary, John Geometres, presents Nicephorus, first

and foremost, as a valiant warrior: like the sun, the emperor dashes to the East and then to the West with his shining arms; the sun can be covered with clouds and darkness, whereas the emperor is immune from disaster.<sup>78</sup> John puts the following words into the mouth of the dead Nicephorus: 'The sword cut off my head, and in the darkness the murderous hand stole my empire, but who can erase the monuments of my great triumphs?' And John indulges in enumerating Nicephorus's victories on noble Crete and glorious Cyprus, over invincible Tarsus and other Cilician towns, at the walls of Antioch and of other Assyrian cities, over the Persians, Phoenicians, Arabs, and thousands<sup>79</sup> of the tribes of the earth which surrendered to the emperor's spear.

Leo the Deacon and John Geometres lived and wrote during Basil II's reign, at the very end of the tenth century. The image of the great warrior-emperor Nicephorus Phokas was just being conjured up. Theodosius the Deacon who was their senior by only one generation is still far from this idea, even though he was dealing with Nicephorus's capture of Crete. For Theodosius the major hero is not Nicephorus but the people, the community of soldiers. In one episode an unnamed general, 'slow in flight, but fast in pursuit', calls upon his warriors to die 'for the most pious leader of the people' (that is, the Emperor Romanus II (959-63) - a weakling who stayed in Constantinople, far from the battlefield), so that the emperor would enlarge his empire and rule alone over the whole earth.<sup>80</sup> Theodosius also praises the heroic deeds of another unnamed general who had no fear of daggers and rushed alone against the barbarian cavalry: he showed what kind of men 'Rome' was still capable of rearing.<sup>81</sup> Theodosius presents Nicephorus's victory in cosmic rather than in human terms: the crowds of stars were rejoicing and the order of angels dancing, because the invincible beast was killed and the abominable Leviathan destroyed.<sup>82</sup> The time had not yet come for the idealization of the warrior as somehow apart from the amorphous mass of soldiery - pious and strong defenders of the Byzantine Empire that they might be.

Nicephorus's image as presented by Leo the Deacon and John Geometres lacks an essential trait typical of late-eleventh-century panegyrics: the emperor may appear as a paragon of military virtues, but he has not yet been invested with the qualities of a noble 'knight'. For Attaleiates the Phokas family possessed a noble lineage with a long pedigree rooted in a glorious past, but this is of not interest to either Leo or John Geometres.

But even this one-sided image of the victorious emperor turned out to be transitory: it did not long survive the generation that remembered and cherished Nicephorus's successes. The warrior-emperor vanishes from the eulogies of the mid-eleventh century. There re-emerges, instead, the traditional image of the pious ruler adorned by the four imperial virtues celebrated in Byzantine rhetoric.

Military prowess did not find a place in the imperial portraits drawn by Christopher of Mitylene. While other emperors might be involved in battles, or favour horse racing, or might be patrons of science and literature, Michael IV (1034-41) was most interested in almsgiving.<sup>83</sup> Christopher singled out Constantine IX Monomachos's generosity: the emperor not only streamed with gold (like the River Pactolus), but also streamed with honours (timorroos - a neologism);

the poet makes great play with the founts of honours and the rivers of gold, which the emperor released.<sup>84</sup> Even more explicit and eloquent was Christopher's contemporary, John Mauropous.

We do not need to quote Mauropous at any length, because Jacques Lefort has already drawn our attention to his traditional treatment of the imperial image.<sup>85</sup> In two speeches dedicated to the Petchenek settlement on Byzantine territory and to the suppression of Tornikes's insurrection respectively, Mauropous asserted that it was not arms that provided victory over both the barbarians and the rebels. The warlike hordes were impious, ignorant, and lawless, and therefore doomed to be defeated. In contrast, the Emperor Constantine Monomachos was pious, intelligent, and law-abiding. He won the day, although (or rather because) he was a peacemaker. It was not, in Mauropous's opinion, the business of a good emperor to wage war, for he would know only too well the uncertainty associated with violence: much better to rely upon persuasion rather than force. The emperor sought neither tyranny nor despotic sway, but preferred the kingly and fatherly methods, which God Himself uses to rule the world.

More complicated is the case of Kekaumenos, who has recently been identified by Gennadij Litavrin as a general and characterized as an advocate of the Byzantine aristocracy.<sup>86</sup> This is neither the time nor the place to return to the burning question of Kekaumenos's social status. The essential point is that, whoever he might have been, he maintained the traditional idea of the four imperial virtues of fortitude, righteousness, chastity, and intelligence. Nor did Kekaumenos conceive of fortitude as military courage, but rather as a form of spiritual perseverance. Nor, again, did he consider either fortitude or intelligence as absolute virtues, since they might be put to evil use.<sup>87</sup> Conforming with tradition Kekaumenos proclaimed the emperor as God's elect<sup>88</sup> and the father of his subjects: the emperor, in his view, must take equal care of all strata<sup>89</sup> of society, soldiers, members of the Senate, and ordinary citizens. Above all, he must be just.<sup>91</sup> Only one of the traditional virtues suffered the lash of Kekaumenos's pen, that of generosity: he would that the emperor lavished his grants only on the 'worthy'.<sup>92</sup> Kekaumenos's admonitions to an emperor contain no reference to the ruler's personal participation in battle. Though the emperor is obliged to care for his troops,<sup>93</sup> the fleet, and armaments, though the army is described as 'the emperor's glory and the might of the palace',<sup>94</sup> the author does not demand a display of military courage on the part of the emperor himself. Nor have noble origins yet acquired a place among the values mandatory for an ideal prince.

The Byzantine attitude towards noble origins was in the eleventh and twelfth centuries far from uniform. Some authors prevaricated, not knowing to which quality they should give preference - noble blood or moral perfection. Psellos might assert that promotion to the Senate and the higher military positions should not just depend on the aristocratic connections of the candidates,<sup>95</sup> but he was also displeased by the Byzantine habit of promoting humble people to high rank, sometimes even slaves purchased from the barbarians.<sup>96</sup> Some authors went so far as to mock the search for fashionable pedigrees. In his dirge on Andronikos, John II's second son, Michael Italikos mentions his high title, military skill, and keen intelligence,<sup>97</sup> but



does not touch upon his nobility of birth. In another monody, dedicated to Alexius I's son Andronikos, Italikos reminds us that this prince belonged to the first and imperial kin,<sup>98</sup> but immediately after this he emphasizes that Andronikos was far from overweeningly proud of his noble ancestors, unlike so many people of high rank. Only in passing does he mention Manuel I's imperial origin,<sup>99</sup> though he does provide a long description of Eirene Doukaina's forefathers and descendants, who were kings and generals.<sup>100</sup> But he then indulges, as also in his monody on Alexius I's son Andronikos, in a quite untraditional deviation. Myth, he claims, traces lineages to Peleus and Ajax and through them to Zeus, climbing thus ever upward. He prefers the downward path, for only then will he be able to reach the apex of the aristocracy, the Empress Eirene.<sup>101</sup> Italikos's polemics are obvious; they are directed in the main against his contemporaries, who, in the same way as Attaleiates, had been inventing genealogies for their heroes. In his panegyric for the Patriarch Michael Kourkouas (1143-46) Italikos ironically exclaims that he could have traced the patriarch's origins to the Arsacids, as others might to Ajax, and listed all the successes, riches, thrones and titles of Michael's ancestors, in order to eulogize him more than heroes of epic and myth, but he will refrain from doing so since Michael's lineage derives from God.<sup>102</sup>

Despite all these fluctuations and inconsistencies it would seem that by the end of the eleventh century a new social ideal was developing - the ideal of the noble and courageous 'knight'. This new tendency appears to corroborate and, in part, explain that radical shift in the popularity of hagiography during the twelfth century, which Paul Magdalino has so brilliantly illuminated:<sup>103</sup> the image of the holy man ceased to be popular with the ideologists of the Comnenian dynasty, and the production of saints' lives dwindled radically. If Eustathios of Thessalonica, the staunchest supporter and admirer of a 'chivalrous' Manuel I, composed the *Life* of the otherwise unknown St. Philotheos of Opsikion, its core contained a negation of the ascetic way of life. Ascetics might seek solitary places in which to live, crawling into caves or fissures in the earth, but they were only hiding from men and escaping the market place of life. Eustathios goes on to characterize life as a theatre in which God acts as a judge (*agonothetes*). He admits that it is quite possible to fight the demoniac army in isolation, having but a single witness, God Himself. On the other hand, those who defeat the adversary while observed by a thousand eyes ought not to feel shame before the solitary ascetic, not in the slightest, since their deeds are the more impressive. While the latter travels his smooth path meeting no obstacles, the former, struggling in the everyday world, has to contend with all kinds of stumbling blocks. If he wins, he deserves all the more credit. Surely, concludes Eustathios, the sun is beautiful when it sinks beneath the earth and disappears from view, but how much more beautiful it is when it rises and shows its perfection to the world.<sup>104</sup> The ideal of the *vita contemplativa* gave way to that of the *vita activa*, the ideal of the holy man to that of the noble warrior, the new ideal being embodied in the figure of the emperor.

The gold coins of Isaac I Comnenus (1057-59) reveal in a palpable form a radical break with the traditional imperial image: the emperor is shown grasping the scabbard with his left hand and holding

a sword against his right shoulder.<sup>105</sup> Not only do we possess Isaac's coins, but also contemporary comments on their significance. According to Attaleiates<sup>106</sup> and the Continuator of the Chronicle of Skylitzes,<sup>107</sup> the emperor enjoined that he be depicted on his coins holding a sword, in order to impute his ascent to the throne, not to God, but to his personal prowess and to his military experience. The opposition which Isaac's innovation clearly provoked must have contributed to the suppression of the martial effigy of the emperor on the coinage. The Comneni, nevertheless, continued to proclaim their military concerns on their coins. Instead of utilizing military portraits of the emperor, they turned to the depiction of military saints. Alexius I Comnenus introduced St. Demetrios, John II used St. George, Manuel I St. Theodore.<sup>108</sup>

The militarization of the imperial image was reflected in state ritual. The late Roman custom of proclaiming an emperor by raising him on a shield was probably revived around the mid-eleventh century. The fact that Constantine Porphyrogenitus mentions this ceremony as a Khazar custom<sup>109</sup> indicates that it had fallen into disuse in Byzantium long before the tenth century. The revival of this custom more or less coincides with Isaac I's attempt to introduce the military image of the emperor on the coinage. According to Psellos, the rebellious Bulgars proclaimed Peter Deljan ruler in 1040 by raising him up on a shield.<sup>110</sup> This evidence may be questioned since it refers to a Bulgarian uprising, but soon afterwards, in 1047, the usurper Leo Tornikios was raised up on a shield in a thoroughly Byzantine milieu.<sup>111</sup> In the twelfth century the description of a ruler raised up on a shield even appears as a scene in Prodhomos's romance *Rodanthe and Dosikles*,<sup>112</sup> interest in military ceremonial being quite natural in such an advocate of chivalrous imperial virtues as Prodhomos. When in 1254 Theodore II Laskaris was elevated on a shield, the procedure was regarded by his contemporary Akropolites as customary.<sup>113</sup>

The ritual of the raising on a shield is well known in painting too. The theme was often treated by Byzantine miniaturists, particularly in connection with the coronation of the kings of the Old Testament. Rare in the ninth and tenth centuries, the theme becomes much more popular during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>114</sup> The raising of an emperor on a shield seems to be shown, as well, on two marble roundels, which are usually dated to the twelfth century.<sup>115</sup> The popularity of this theme in art may thus be related to the re-emergence of this kind of imperial ceremony.

The new image of the warrior-emperor had an even broader impact on imperial iconography. Manuel I had his palace at Blachernai decorated with scenes of his own martial deeds as well as famous battles of antiquity.<sup>116</sup> The emperor was also depicted in military attire on *objets d'art*. An anonymous poet of the twelfth century describes a golden bowl decorated 'in the usual way' with Manuel I pursuing the defeated king of the 'Persians' and an innumerable host from Iconium.<sup>117</sup> I leave it for art historians to study the evolution of the imperial ideal as reflected in illuminated manuscripts and *objets d'art*.<sup>118</sup>

To conclude: the imperial ideal around the year 900 was founded on biblical and rhetorical tradition. It included piety and various



civil values, often in the shape of the quartet - spiritual fortitude, righteousness, chastity, and intelligence. By the middle of the eleventh century two new virtues were introduced into the 'Prince's Mirror' - noble origin and military prowess. They were later to overshadow the traditional qualities, even if at first there was some hesitation. It seems that the concept of noble blood was accepted more reluctantly than that of imperial valour. The image of the noble warrior was not confined to the imperial ideal, but extended throughout the upper stratum of Byzantine society, dislodging the traditional image of the holy man. These ideological shifts of the eleventh, and especially the twelfth century, were a reflection of substantial changes within pre-Comnenian and Comnenian society: what might be described as the abortive attempt at the 'feudalization' or 'aristocratization' of the Byzantine Empire. But this is quite another topic.

#### NOTES

1. See H. Hunger, Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner (Munich, 1978), I, p.160.
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4. Ibid., col. XXXIICD.
5. Ibid., cols. XXXVIIIB, XLVIIIAB.
6. Ibid., col. XXXIIIBC.
7. Ibid., col. XXIXD.
8. Ibid., cols. XXXVIBC, XLVCD.
9. Ibid., col. XXVIIIBC.
10. Ibid., col. XXXIIB.
11. Ibid., cols. XXXVIABC, XLVAB.
12. Ibid., cols. XXVIIIAB, XXXIIAD, XXXVIC.
13. Ibid., col. XLVB.
14. Zepos, Jus, II, p.236,1.5.
15. Ibid., p.114,1.4.
16. Migne, PG, 107, col. XXVBC.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., col. LIIAB.
19. Leonis imperatoris Tactica, ed. R. Vari (Budapest, 1917), I, pp.27-29.
20. A. Vogt and I. Hausherr, 'Oraison funèbre de Basile Ier par son fils Léon VI le Sage', OC 26,1 (1932), p.60,11.18-19.
21. Ibid., p.48,11.9,16-17, p.58,1.7, p.60,11.1,4,9.
22. Ibid., p.56,11.22-23.
23. Ibid., p.56,11.24-28.
24. Ibid., p.58,11.14-15.
25. Ibid., p.42,11.21-26.
26. Ibid., p.42,11.27-29.

27. Ibid., p.44,11.23,27.
28. Ibid., p.42,11.29-30.
29. Ibid., p.44,11.5-7.
30. Ibid., p.44,11.15-18.
31. Theophanes Continuatus (Bonn), p.220,11.7-12.
32. Ibid., p.315,11.7-9.
33. Ibid., p.315,11.14-16.
34. Ibid., pp.257-8.
35. Ibid., pp.260-62.
36. Ibid., p.265,11.5-7.
37. Ibid., p.265,11.8-14.
38. Ibid., p.267,11.9-15.
39. Ibid., p.270,11.13-19.
40. Ibid., p.269,11.1-15.
41. Ibid., pp.272-6.
42. See A.P. Kazhdan, 'Sotsial'nye vozzrenija Mikhaila Attaliata', ZRVI 17 (1976), pp. 5-8. Cf. A. Kazhdan, Studies on Byzantine Literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries (Cambridge, 1984), pp.23ff.
43. Theophylacte d'Achrida, Discours, Traités, Poésies, ed. P. Gautier (Thessalonica, 1980), p.193,11.21-23.
44. Ibid., p.183,11.4-8.
45. Ibid., p.201,11.8-11.
46. Ibid., p.209,1.13.
47. Ibid., p.193,11.27-30. Cf. p.207,11.2-4.
48. Ibid., p.199,1.28.
49. Ibid., p.207,1.31.
50. Ibid., p.201,11.22-23, p.203,11.26-27.
51. Ibid., p.185,11.24-25.
52. W.Hörandner, Theodoros Prodromos. Historische Gedichte (Vienna, 1974), pp.89-108. Cf. A. Kazhdan, Studies on Byzantine Literature, pp.87ff.

53. Hörandner, Op. cit., no.30,11.83-85.
54. Cinnamus (Bonn), p.31,1.6.
55. Ibid., p.61,11.22-23.
56. Ibid., p.95,11.8-10.
57. Ibid., p.189,11.15-21.
58. Ibid., p.192,11.3-7.
59. Ibid., pp.240-1.
60. Ibid., p.96,11.3-4, p.110,11.3-4.
61. Ibid., p.221,11.18-21.
62. Ibid., p.187,11.16-18.
63. Ibid., p.127,11.12-15.
64. Ibid., p.267,11.1-12.
65. See A. Kazhdan, Studies on Byzantine Literature, pp.115ff.
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67. Ibid., pp.209-10; W. Regel, Fontes rerum byzantinarum (Petrograd, 1892), I, p.4,11.8-11.
68. Escor. Y. II. 10, fol. 44v.
69. Eustathii Opuscula, p.197,11.58-59.
70. Ibid., p.197,11.74-77.
71. Ibid., p.197,11.90-93. Cf. Regel, Fontes, I, p.71,1.25.
72. Regel, Fontes, I, p.122,11.26-27, cf. pp.89-90.
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76. Ibid., p.76,11.17-21.
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87. Litavrin, Op. cit., p.288,11.12-16.
88. Ibid., p.274,1.9.
89. Ibid., p.284,11.8-10.
90. Ibid., p.284,11.17-19.
91. Ibid., p.274,11.11-13.
92. Ibid., p.276,11.7-9.
93. Ibid., p.276,1.21.
94. Ibid., p.292,11.15-16.
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99. Ibid., p.278,11.19-25.
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104. Eustathii Opuscula, p.138,11.37-87.

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106. Attaleiates, p.60,11.3-4.
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108. M.F. Hendy, Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire, 1081-1261, (Washington, 1969), p.437.
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110. Michael Psellos, Chronographie, I, p.77: IV,40<11.21-22.
111. Ibid., II, p.18: VI,104,11.4-5.
112. Theodore Prodromos, Rodante and Dosikles in R. Hercher, Erotici scriptores graeci (Leipzig, 1859), II, ch.5, vv.109-11.
113. Georgii Acropolitae Opera, ed. A.Heisenberg/P.Wirth (Stuttgart, 1978), I, p.105,11.20-21.
114. C. Walter, 'Raising on a Shield in Byzantine Iconography', REB 33(1975), pp.133-75 (n.b. the stemma on p.174). Cf. H. Hunger, Das Byzantinische Herrscherbild (Darmstadt, 1975), p.4,n.13.
115. H. Pierce and R. Tyler, 'A Marble Emperor-Roundel of the twelfth century', DOP 2(1941), pp.3-9.
116. Benjamin of Tudela, Itinerary, ed. A. Asher (New York, n.d.), p.53.
117. Sp. Lampros, 'Ho Markianos Kodix 524', Neos Hellenomnemon, 8 (1911), p. 172 [translated in C. Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire (Englewood Cliffs, NY, 1972), p.228]
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#### CHAPTER 4 - BYZANTINE SNOBBERY\*

Paul Magdalino

If it is meaningful to talk about the Byzantine aristocracy, it should be meaningful to talk about Byzantine snobbery, to discuss, in a Byzantine context, a mentality which we automatically associate with aristocratic society. Yet while the Byzantines inherited the ancient concept of aristocracy, they neither inherited nor developed, *expressis verbis*, a concept of snobbery. They spoke of 'ambition' (*philotimia*), 'love of glory' (*philodoxia*), 'vainglory' (*kenodoxia*), 'love of self' (*philautia*), 'exhibitionism' (*epideiktikotês*), 'conceit' (*oiêsis*), 'swell-headedness' (*physiôsis*, *typhos*), 'disdain' (*hyperopsia*), but none of these terms quite captures the social essence of snobbery. The word is of modern, English origin, and has inescapable associations with the post-industrial class-system and modern literature. It is embedded in a cultural matrix in which middle-class and, to some extent, proletarian values prevail. As such, snobbery is one of those words which one applies to the ancient and medieval worlds at the risk of one's scholarly credibility: words like 'state', 'class', 'constitution', 'humanism', 'nationalism'. Such terms are invaluable as threads to unravel as one penetrates the labyrinth of the sources - yet they are useful for finding the way out, not for finding the way in. They allow us to relate our experience to that of the past only once we have been over the ground and acquired a sense of perspective.

We should begin, therefore, by considering briefly whether the concept of snobbery is transferable from the modern social context, and, if so, whether Byzantium was a society in which snobbery could function.

Snobbery may perhaps satisfactorily be defined as an affectation of social exclusiveness, displayed either through conspicuous conformity to a status group with which one wants to identify, or through conspicuous rejection of a group with which one is anxious not to be associated, or through gratuitous attention to social inequalities. The snob is essentially a socially insecure person who fears that his or her chosen status is in danger of going unrecognised. Snobbery is not, therefore, likely to be articulated in a caste system, or in a society where status is immediately self-evident in terms of one single attribute, such as wealth or occupation. On the other hand, we should surely expect to find it in any mobile society where status depends on a number of variables, whose precise interrelationship is not consistently defined. Byzantium clearly was such a society, at least from the eleventh century, when social expansion outgrew the traditional hierarchy of rewards and honours. Status could be measured in terms of birth, wealth, rank, profession, education, and accomplishments. These attributes were usually but not necessarily

linked, and although rank tended to be the definitive criterion, it was not absolute, since it could be regarded as secondary to the qualifications for which it was bestowed. There was no fixed hierarchy of qualifications for rank, and social inequalities could not be expressed solely in terms of one scale of values. When rhetors wanted to evoke the totality of society, they had to use a multiplicity of contrasts. Thus John Mauropous describes the subjects of Constantine IX as "classed in various ranks and orders, monks and married people, priests and laymen, title-holders and commoners, civilians and soldiers, well-born and ill-born, rich and poor, those of exalted condition and the lesser".<sup>1</sup> The thirteenth-century historian Theodore Skoutariotes, possibly following a lost twelfth-century source, criticises the Emperor Nicephorus III Botaneiates "because he created everyone senatorial officials: citizens and rustics, slaves and freemen, the well-born and the ill-born, the destitute and the solvent, barbarians and Romans, the poor and the rich, the worthy and the unworthy".<sup>2</sup> This was clearly a social environment in which status could be ambiguous, and status-consciousness could and did take the form of snobbery. The two classic types of modern snob can be identified in the sources: the aggressive, *parvenu* snob, confident in the possession of status symbols, but uncertain of his reception in the milieu to which he aspires, and anxious to cut his ties with the group from which he has sprung; and the defensive snob, the man of relatively high standing who falls on hard times or who sees his status being devalued by the rise of people with credentials other than his own.<sup>3</sup> One might add that inverted snobbery is also to be found, in the ascetic ideal.

The problem in coming to terms with Byzantine snobbery lies not so much in the structure of Byzantine society, nor in the availability of evidence, but in the nature of the evidence - in the ways that snobbery is perceived and expressed in middle and late Byzantine literary texts. Byzantine writers were not incapable of portraying snobbery in graphic detail. One saint's life, that of Philaretos the Younger, is from start to finish the loving portrait of a snob by his proud grandson. Philaretos was a gentleman farmer in eighth-century Asia Minor whose potlatch almsgiving brought him and his numerous family to starvation. But one day a group of imperial agents who were touring Asia Minor in search of a bride for the young Constantine VI caught sight of Philaretos's "ancient, vast, and very delightful house". Although the cupboard was bare, Philaretos invited them to dinner in the great dining room, which his wife dusted specially for the occasion, and they were duly impressed by the "ancient, gilded, round ivory table, so huge that it could seat thirty-six men". As a result of this providential encounter, Philaretos became the emperor's grandfather-in-law and lived happily ever after in Constantinople, where his new-found wealth gave him the opportunity for a last fling. He was especially sympathetic to well-dressed beggars, "because he knew from his own experience that many rich men who fall into poverty wear a fine robe because of their ancient nobility, even though they have no food and become dependent on others; on the other hand, many who appear to be poor have money in their homes, but being unable to forget the old ways of poverty, wear sackcloth stuck together with excrement and collect money by begging".<sup>4</sup>

This text, however, is quite exceptional. On the whole,

Byzantine social snobbery is not extensively described. Psellos and Metochites briefly comment on it as a phenomenon,<sup>5</sup> and Christian moralists condemn vainglory as an aspect of worldliness,<sup>6</sup> but none of them go beyond what John Chrysostom had already said more effectively.<sup>7</sup> Snobbery is satirised in a number of works - the Ptochoprodromic poems, the late medieval verse fables, the *Timarion*, and Mazaris's *Journey into Hades*, but the satire is either too crude or too subtle for immediate consumption by the modern reader. The bourgeois *gentilhomme* was clearly a common figure in the streets of Constantinople,<sup>8</sup> but he was not a prominent figure of literary fun. While Byzantine authors were quick to denounce a *parvenu*, they were less concerned to criticise a *parvenu* for being a snob unless he offended them personally - and even then they did not dwell on the subject.<sup>9</sup> This general lack of observation has much to do with the rhetorical and philosophical interests of Byzantine intellectuals, who were, as we all know, reluctant to deal in mundane and frivolous details. But it may be, too, that their perception of snobbery, especially *parvenu* snobbery, was less critical than ours, because they took ostentation for granted. The man of the world, like the monk or the mime, was recognised by the *skhēma* - the 'figure', or 'life-style' - which he chose to adopt.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, Byzantines seem to have been remarkably free of the prejudice that the social climber is permanently stamped by his origins,<sup>11</sup> and is somehow being untrue to himself if he denies his background and adapts to a higher milieu: indeed, sources of all periods more often imply that present status cancels out past status, and that a man's commitment must be to his final destination. To take an example from the aristocratic twelfth century, Eustathios of Thessalonica, developing the theme that charity is the best investment, compares the generous almsgiver to the man who entrusts his business cares to other people: he will imitate those honour-seeking artisans (*philotimoi tekhnitai*), including some of the most mechanical (*banausoi*), who, having made their pile, spit upon their trade as something shameful, and shun the profit which continues to come from it. Hiding the tools which were once dear to them, they turn their mud into gold, and, abjuring the old craftsman, they enter the imperial palace, radiant and pure.<sup>12</sup>

When it came to voicing their own snobbery, Byzantine writers were not at all reticent. Middle and late Byzantine literature of all genres abounds in the expression of subjective social value-judgements, which appear to speak for themselves. Yet these seemingly unambiguous comments are perhaps the most difficult to interpret. They are nearly always patrician and defensive in tone, and give the impression that the author has always belonged to the establishment. However, one cannot avoid the suspicion that many of these remarks in fact represent *parvenu* snobbery in disguise, especially since most authors are silent or vague on the subject of their own family background. Only the ever forthcoming John Tzetzes provides us with a complete genealogy,<sup>13</sup> and only two authors to my knowledge, Michael Attaleiates and the Patriarch Gregory of Cyprus, openly admit that they are new men.<sup>14</sup> Significantly neither of the two is particularly snobbish, in contrast to Attaleiates's contemporary Michael Psellos, whose tantalising references to *hypatoi* and *patrikioi* on his father's side merely serve to throw a smoke-screen over his own antecedents.<sup>15</sup>

Even when we know something about the author, his snobbery is

not always as transparent as it looks. By way of example, we may consider the case of Alexius Apokaukos, *parakoimōmenos* and *meGas doux*, the tax-farmer's assistant who in the space of twenty years became one of the most wealthy and powerful men in fourteenth-century Constantinople. The main source for Apokaukos's career is the history of John Cantacuzenus, aristocrat, statesman, emperor, monk, and snob. Four times Cantacuzenus refers to Apokaukos's social origins: "of obscure family", "undistinguished and of undistinguished parents", "not one of the well born", "an obscure man spawned of base parents".<sup>16</sup> This sounds very much like snobbery. The other historian of the period, Nicephorus Gregoras, describes Apokaukos in similar terms: "he was not quite one of the nobility", "an undistinguished man of undistinguished parents".<sup>17</sup> This also sounds like snobbery, although more qualified. Another contemporary source alludes to Apokaukos's social background: an encomium by the metropolitan of Selymbria, Philotheos, to the local martyr Agathonikos, mentions that Apokaukos had built a church in gratitude to the saint for some favour, and in this context describes him as being of good family - *kreittōn kata genos*.<sup>18</sup> This sounds rather different, but once again, it sounds like snobbery. Having heard the sound of snobbery three times, our curiosity is aroused and we naturally ask why one snob so blatantly contradicts the other two. We quickly come up with the obvious answer: one version is right and the other is wrong. Since we have the word of two first-rate intellectuals against that of one second-rate religious homilist, we have no difficulty in making up our enlightened minds. We may wonder, however, why the homilist chose to tell such an obvious lie. Among the explanations likely to occur to us might be the following.

Firstly, it is possible that Philotheos thought himself entitled to take liberties with the truth. He was writing an encomium of a saint, and it was quite in order for him to wax fulsome on the subject of men who had venerated his hero. It may be, too, that he wanted to flatter living and influential descendants of Apokaukos, or to echo the local reputation of a man who had attracted much wealth to Selymbria. In any case, the mood was that of praise (*epainos*), and the genre was that of epideictic rhetoric. Philotheos would have learned at school that the so-called 'laws of rhetoric' not only allowed but actually required the rhetor to make full use of the techniques of *auxēsis* (*amplificatio*) to intensify the effect of *epainos*, or, when appropriate, of its opposite, *psogos*. An excellent statement of the way the 'laws of rhetoric' were applied is provided by Tzetzes. Tzetzes wrote to ask a favour of a government official, the *mystikos* Nicephorus Servlias, and addressed him as "descendant of the *Servilii*, the *Caesars* of yore".<sup>19</sup> Later, when writing the inevitable commentary on this letter, Tzetzes felt bound to point out that he was not to be taken literally:

Servilius was a consul and Caesar of the Romans. With forceful method and in a rhetorical manner, I say that Servlias is descended from the *Servilii*. But if someone else wanted, he could have called him Serb Elias. This is the way of the two-tongued rhetor, to use facts and names and everything else for *epainos* and *psogos* as his interest requires.<sup>20</sup>

Thus when Philotheos of Selymbria calls Apokaukos *kreittōn kata*

genos he may well be exercising the glib facility of the two-tongued rhetor. Yet if we accept this, we must recognise that Cantacuzenus and Gregoras were just as likely to have been speaking with the other fork of the rhetorical tongue. Apokaukos was a bête-noire for both of them, especially for Cantacuzenus. Although in his preface Cantacuzenus made the usual promise to avoid praise and blame, it would be naive to suppose that he alone of all Byzantine historians managed to avoid falling into rhetorical habits. In short, we are entitled to doubt whether Apokaukos's background was any more 'base' or 'obscure' than it was 'good'. This was the language of ritual flattery and abuse, but was it the language of social snobbery?

Still assuming, however, that Philotheos was wrong, there is another possible explanation for his error. This is that he was echoing the reputation that Apokaukos created for himself. There is some evidence that Apokaukos claimed the name of Doukas.<sup>21</sup> He may have been entitled to this, but it is also possible that he simply assumed it, just as Joseph Bryennios later in the fourteenth century acquired his noble name, "like a pickpocket", according to Manuel Kalekas.<sup>22</sup> What is certain is that Apokaukos - an unscrupulous, ambitious, and fabulously rich conspicuous consumer, who had himself portrayed in a manuscript of Hippocrates along with a dialogue in verse between himself and the father of all medicine<sup>23</sup> - spared no effort to boost his own image. If we are to believe Theodore Metochites, this is what every Byzantine was doing.<sup>24</sup> Metochites presents a picture of a desperately competitive society of loud-mouthed individuals blinded by self-importance and determined to advertise it, no matter how ridiculous they looked. A similar picture emerges from the two major animal fables of the fourteenth century, the Poulologos and the Tale of the Four-Footed Beasts.<sup>25</sup> These works may or may not lampoon well-known contemporaries and comment bitterly on social inequalities, but what they quite unmistakably reflect is the chronic individualism of Byzantine society - the fact that when its members are brought together and have the chance to speak freely, there is no mutual respect or community of interest, even among members of the same class, but all use their energy in singing their own praises and heaping insults on all who rank anywhere near them, every man intoxicated with his own flow of words. Are the contradictory assessments of Apokaukos perhaps the echoes of slanging-matches of this kind? If so, do they deserve to be regarded as social value-judgements based on social norms, or simply as bluff?

But there is a third possible explanation for the discrepancy, which incorporates the other two. The historians and the homilist may contradict each other because both judgements were right in different ways, in that they were based on different but equally traditional criteria as to what constituted eugeneia - good birth or nobility. Apokaukos was not born into the same social bracket as Cantacuzenus, but did this make him 'ill-born' (dysgenês)? Even if he had no right to the name Doukas, the Apokaukoï were, so far as one can tell, a perfectly respectable family. They had produced a couple of protospatharioi in the eleventh century and a metropolitan of Naupaktos in the thirteenth, which suggests that they may well have ranked among those families which, in the words of this same metropolitan, "were of middling condition as owners of property and title-holders".<sup>26</sup> The ambiguous status of this group, from which most Byzantine writers came, is the key to understanding not only the

social position of Alexius Apokaukos, but also the whole basis of the subjective snobbery expressed in the sources. I should therefore like to concentrate on one basic question: what did the Byzantines understand by the words eugeneia and eugenês?

Professor Kazhdan has done much to clarify the nature of the problem in his fundamental study of the Byzantine ruling class in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.<sup>27</sup> As he has shown, Byzantine authors of the period use the words in a wide variety of senses. Usage varied not only from generation to generation and from author to author, but also within a single author's literary output. The term eugenês was applied to princes of the blood and to the most unlikely characters. A man could be considered ennobled by almost any notable quality that he possessed, including nobility of soul. Here is a sample from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. According to John Mauroπους, St. Dositheos the Younger was from one of the noble families of Trebizond, "for his father's fathers ranked among the patrikioi, and not among those who have recently obtained the dignity, but among those for whom nobility was, so to speak, hereditary - they were the Genesioi".<sup>28</sup> According to Psellos, his daughter Styliane was very noble on her mother's side because she was composed of "drops of imperial blood".<sup>29</sup> Attaleiates criticises Nicephorus Bryennios for not recognising Nicephorus Botaneiates's superior claim to the throne, "because the Botaneiates family had served as commanders in the west as well as the east, whereas his (Bryennios's) ancestors were hardly worthy to be their servants, being obscure (aphaneis) and not even appointed to the lowest of officer ranks. Nor did he consider that the emperor was a noble from the east, whereas he himself was a westerner and therefore ill-born (dysgenês) in comparison".<sup>30</sup> In the late twelfth century, Eustathios of Thessalonica describes a certain group of opponents of Andronikos I, who included a Maleinos, as belonging to the 'inferior nobility'.<sup>31</sup> Choniates, however, says of the same Maleinos that he was "from the province of Philippopolis, a man of undistinguished family, not brilliantly favoured by fortune, not notable for his profession".<sup>32</sup> Theodore II Laskaris addressed his teacher George Akropolites as "noble from the virtues of your parents and still greater on account of your birthplace".<sup>33</sup> Pachymeres describes how Theodore II arranged marriages between noble women and men who were not of noble seed, but received nobility from the emperor through the titles which he gave them.<sup>34</sup> Alexius Makrembolites, in his Dialogue between the Rich and the Poor, has the poor complain that the rich consider them 'ill born' because of their poverty.<sup>35</sup>

To pin down this protean concept, and to separate rhetoric and bluff from authentic statements of social norms is not easy, because, as is well known, nobility was never, so to speak, built into the Byzantine 'constitution' as a juridically defined status.<sup>36</sup> In the final analysis, we may have to accept that rhetoric and bluff were the real norms. However, even rhetoric and bluff require that words have standard meanings. In Byzantium, official standards were set not only by the letter of the written law, but also by the 'living law' of the emperor, and by the customs and traditions of the polity, which had the force of law in Byzantine eyes. If we examine Byzantine concepts of nobility with regard to the source of ennoblement, we can see that there were ultimately two ennobling authorities: imperial power and civic tradition. I would therefore suggest that



the problem is not so much that the Byzantines lacked a normative definition of nobility, but that they maintained a double standard, according to which eugeneia was associated either with proximity to the emperor or with membership of the polity. The ambiguity is well expressed in the words of a fourteenth century hagiographer, Maximos the Deacon, who wrote of one beneficiary of SS. Cosmas and Damian's miraculous cures that he was "not one of those who procured eugeneia externally, but stood high in the palace and had familiarity with the emperor".<sup>37</sup>

Nobility could be derived from the emperor in four ways: through kinship or descent, through investiture with an imperial dignity, through descent from an imperial dignitary, and through appointment to high office in imperial service. The notion that the imperial majesty was the principal source of ennoblement was obviously well established by the eleventh century, and it became a basic tenet of political ideology under the Comneni. Not only did position in the hierarchy come to depend on degree of kinship to the emperor, but the Comnenian clan came to constitute a separate status group within the hierarchy over and above the 'senate', distinguished by vast wealth, titles which were in origin imperial epithets, and a monopoly of the highest military commands. Indeed, the Comnenian emperors did everything, short of actually publishing legislation, to constitute this imperial nobility as an official status group. Manuel I even punished unauthorized marriage into the clan as a criminal offence.<sup>38</sup> The troubles after Manuel's death caused a great shock to the system, and in some ways the generation before 1204 marked a return to the conditions of the eleventh century. In the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, more changes occurred. However, the essential features of the Comnenian system remained. The role of the Comnenian clan as the nobility survived the failure of the male Comnenian line of emperors. Official forms of address in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries show this most clearly. According to a notarial formulary of the time, a soldier was to be addressed as 'most brave' (andrikôtatos), a grammatikos as 'most learned' (logiôtatos), a lower provincial official as 'great and glorious' (megalodoxotatos), and a higher official (archon) by his title, but the epithet 'most noble' (paneugenestatos) is reserved to the group known as the archontes Komnenoi.<sup>39</sup> This usage is followed almost exactly by Demetrios Chomatenos, archbishop of Ochrid, in his judicial decisions. It is striking, too, how consistently Byzantine historians from Choniates to Cantacuzenus use the terms eugenês and eugeneia to apply to people who combined Comnenian lineage (or descent from a foreign royal dynasty) with high office and kinship or 'familiarity' (oikeiotês) with the reigning emperor.<sup>40</sup> In this sense, Alexios Apokaukos was certainly not 'well born'.

However, there was another traditional view of good birth in which the emperor was not directly relevant. In the vocabulary of late antique and medieval Greek jurists, the word eugenês had a precise meaning: it was the equivalent of Latin ingenuus and denoted, quite simply, a free-born man.<sup>41</sup> We should not be too hasty in dismissing this usage as a piece of antiquated legal jargon without significance or snob-appeal for ordinary Byzantines. It is clearly meant something to Eustathios Boilas, a very ordinary Byzantine, who says in his will that he wishes the children of his freed slaves to be "eugeneis and free in every way".<sup>42</sup> The notion that free birth

was good birth was hardly without foundation in a slave-owning society such as Byzantium remained until the thirteenth century. The Basilica incorporated a law forbidding freed slaves to join the senatorial order.<sup>43</sup> Besides, full, free citizen status was conventionally regarded as something exclusive, involving not only legal freedom but economic independence and a degree of moral and cultural respectability. The seventh-century biographer of Theodore of Sykeon divided the people of Germia into the leptos dêmos and the eleutheroi, meaning the rich and respectable who were ashamed to let their demonically-possessed relatives be seen raving in public.<sup>44</sup> In the law courts, basic citizen rights, such as the right to testify, continued, at least until the eleventh century, to be denied to certain categories of free people: entertainers, women, minors, and all who counted as aporoï or destitute because they lacked a paid occupation (epitedeuma),<sup>45</sup> public function (strateia) or property to the value of 50 nomismata.

An association between good birth and solid citizenship is implied in several ways. In the Life of Luke the Stylite, the eugeneia of the saint's parents is linked with their economic and professional status: they are described as "well-born .... spending their life in modest wealth and sufficiency of necessities, devoting themselves to the science of agricultural practice, and enrolled for military service".<sup>46</sup> In many texts, quality of genos is closely tied to prestige of patris, with Constantinople naturally the firm favorite.<sup>47</sup> A variation on this theme is the tendency, in some twelfth-century and later sources, to treat eugeneia as a racial and cultural phenomenon. Perhaps the best exponent of this attitude is the Patriarch Germanos II (1223-1240) who wrote of certain detractors:

What do they say? That our Patriarch is not one of the well-born, nor can those who bore and nurtured him boast of being natives and sucklings of the Queen of Cities. What are you talking about? Are we worthless for this reason, and are they worthy (entimoi) and well-born who terminated their mothers' pains in that city? What do you make of the filthy spawn of courtesans and the fruits of adultery, the offspring of slave-girls bought for money, originating perhaps from the Ros or from the descendants of Hagar and the rest of the melting pot of the nations .... ? Are these noble and respectable, who resemble mules in their racial mixture, and will the soil of Constantinople ennoble them?<sup>48</sup>

In a more pretentious vein, Theodore Metochites wrote of his friend, the 'philosopher' Joseph, that he came of an old family, from a long line of Hellenes, whose Roman nobility had been unadulterated by barbarian foreignness and brashness. Although he grew up in the Ionian islands under Latin occupation, he managed to acquire a degree of civilisation, because the 'Hellenic nobility' of literary education had not altogether died out.<sup>49</sup> Contempt for provincials and barbarians is one of the most recurrent themes of Byzantine snobbery. Although often couched in deliberately archaic language, it was no mere literary conceit, but corresponded to a deep-seated exclusiveness and paranoia with regard to the outsider, whether he came as invader, immigrant, or slave. The sentiments quoted above must be seen in the context of, for example, George Tornikes's disapproving

references to barbarian slaves 'bought in the market' rising high in imperial service, Choniates's indignation at the way Manuel I made worthy Romaioi work for foreigners and mixobarbaroi, and Mesarites's comment that when the city mob broke into the Great Palace in 1200 it was the strangers who desecrated the churches.<sup>50</sup>

The myth of the noble, native citizen was not exclusive to Byzantium. Western medievalists will recognise it as a characteristic of the civic culture of the medieval Italian commune. There are some similarities between the social outlook of Theodore Metochites and that of his contemporary Dante Alighieri,<sup>51</sup> who tends to be taken more seriously because he wrote in the vernacular. However, there are also important differences, and they have something to do with the fact that while Dante began his career by enrolling in a guild, Metochites entered public life by reciting speeches in front of the Emperor Andronikos II,<sup>52</sup> and lived in a city where guild-membership was, in principle, a disqualification for public office.<sup>53</sup> The question is therefore, how much real snob-value did 'civic nobility' have in Byzantium? Was it merely a poor substitute for 'court nobility' as far as Byzantine writers were concerned? Was their snobbery primarily 'court snobbery' or 'civic snobbery', and how was it affected by the 'aristocratisation' of Byzantine society under the Comneni?

At first sight it would seem that the answer is quite obvious. Byzantine intellectuals fancied themselves as a cultural elite, able to read and write in a hierarchy of literary styles. Given the power and patronage structure of their society, their elitism was inseparable from the elitism of the court. Metochites said it all when he opined that Aelius Aristides enjoyed greater freedom of speech than Demosthenes.<sup>54</sup> Some writers made a virtue of opting out of the system, but they or their circumstances were highly individual: Tzetzes had ruined his career chances by a youthful indiscretion, and he was something of a crank;<sup>55</sup> Michael Choniates was evidently going through a phase of student idealism when he declared that he was not going to sell his soul by delivering encomia in public;<sup>56</sup> Blemmydes had independent means and was even more of a crank than Tzetzes.<sup>57</sup> In general, it can be said that Byzantine intellectuals tended to identify with the court and despise the common people. Moreover, this tendency became more marked with the establishment of the Comnenian clan as the official nobility. The aristocratic values of the imperial elite were proclaimed in literature not only by some of its own members - Nicephorus Bryennios and Anna Comnena in the twelfth century, Andronikos Palaiologos<sup>58</sup> and John Cantacuzenus in the Palaeologan period - but also by a host of other writers, among them Niketas Choniates, whose obsession with noble birth and military prowess is as remarkable as his violent contempt for tradesmen and for the rabble of Constantinople in general.<sup>59</sup> References to the nobility of the native citizen are comparatively rare. In any case, court nobility and civic nobility are nowhere presented as mutually exclusive, and in a sense the difference between them was mainly one of degree. The late Byzantine concern with purity of genos can be seen to operate at the court as well as at the civic or national level. Thus Manuel Philes wrote of John Cantacuzenus:<sup>60</sup>

Drawing his golden ancestry from eagles  
There is no way he is going to be a jackdaw<sup>61</sup>  
And as an unfailing touchstone of this  
He is able to look upon the imperial light directly,  
And carries nothing in his blood  
Which is adulterated, mixed, or diluted.

Having said this, however, it is not enough to conclude that Byzantine intellectuals simply adopted and publicised the values of the court. There were many inside the court, particularly soldiers and slaves, with whom they had little sympathy, and many outside with whom they had a great deal in common.<sup>62</sup> These included, obviously, doctors, teachers, notaries, advocates, and clergy. There were also, especially in times of political upheaval, members of once distinguished families which had suffered disgrace and confiscation for political reasons; such families were particularly numerous after the Comnenian coup, and their existence must have done much to reinforce the conviction that nobility did not begin and end at court. Moreover, attitudes to the common people were clearly more complex than they sound. To some extent, contempt was conditioned by xenophobia: Choniates, like the Patriarch Germanos, stresses the multiracial character of the populace.<sup>63</sup> Besides, the 'vulgar crowd' of the market place was not an undifferentiated plebeian mass: the Book of the Eparch shows that there was a hierarchy of arts, and the Peira draws a basic distinction between corporations of manual workers (sōmateia) and guilds (systemata) of merchants, such as silk-dealers, who had slaves to do the degrading work.<sup>64</sup> The effective social difference between these people and potential rentiers like Tzetzes, who was promised the rents from a couple of perfume boutiques,<sup>65</sup> cannot have been very great. Reading between the lines of much twelfth century literature, one realises that its authors were closer to the people than they cared to admit.<sup>66</sup> They show surprising sympathy for the lot of the exploited poor,<sup>66</sup> and a surprisingly sharp eye for the grosser aspects of life, even when deploring them.<sup>67</sup> They show themselves to be far more sensitive to the basic contrast between wealth and poverty than to the finer distinctions between rich and super-rich or between old wealth and new wealth; the status-symbols to which they draw attention are the basic ones - fine clothes, and sleek, well-fed mules.<sup>68</sup> Above all, twelfth-century writers betray a strong fascination with the artisan, whose life and work turn up again and again in their writings.<sup>69</sup> The following remarks of Eustathios perhaps illustrate why:

If a man is renowned in the market as being a master in some craft, we exert ourselves and invite him over in order to procure from him what we need, and if he does not turn up, we seek him out and find him at great effort; and rushing out to him we obtain the object of our desire, sometimes paying extra,<sup>70</sup> in order to beautify our flesh in some piece of finery.

Like the artisan, the twelfth-century rhetor was the practitioner of a tekhnē,<sup>71</sup> selling his expertise to a patron, and in some ways he was at a disadvantage: the services he provided were less basic, and the tools of his own trade - education and books - were available to any tradesman who had money.<sup>72</sup> Although the art of logoi was traditionally regarded as being superior to the

banausoi tekhnai, the mechanical arts, it was, like them, a part of urban tradition, and dependent on urban prosperity.<sup>73</sup> Recent discussions of the eleventh-century literary revival have rightly connected this with an expansion in the urban economy.<sup>74</sup> It is no coincidence that the civilian emperors of the mid-eleventh century opened the senate both to men of learning and to rich tradesmen: both constituted pressure-groups formed by urban expansion, and both had a stake in the abolition of the distinction between senators and citizens, as Psellos put it. Psellos had reservations about the political wisdom of this policy, but there can be no doubt that he approved of the basic principle that the senate should be open to bona fide citizens. Both he and Attaleiates saw the senate as a citizen aristocracy rather than as an imperial aristocracy.<sup>75</sup>

The coming of the Comneni neither halted urban expansion, nor did it block the promotion of rich tradesmen: the famous ruling of Alexius I simply required them to give up their guild membership if they wanted full senatorial privileges.<sup>76</sup> What the Comnenian regime did was to redistribute wealth within the ruling class in favour of a small group of patrons with a strong sense of their separate identity as a military elite ennobled by exclusive ties with the emperor. Their aristocratic ethos of noble blood, noble violence, and noble luxury now became a part of political orthodoxy, which the literati were required to celebrate along with the image of the emperor. And celebrate it they did.<sup>77</sup> But how seriously did they take it? It is, of course, impossible to generalise about so many different individuals, and we are still far from a proper appreciation of the nuances which are our only real clues. We have mentioned Choniates; here is an author who probably did genuinely believe in the chivalric virtues which had been cultivated at the court of Manuel I.<sup>78</sup> But Choniates's views were undoubtedly conditioned by his obsession with the empire's weakness in relation to other societies, notably the Latin west, which had a better sense of social order. In some passages, he betrays a more critical attitude to the Comnenian elite which may have been more typical of twelfth-century intellectuals.<sup>79</sup> The Timarion has been interpreted as the subversion of the aristocracy,<sup>80</sup> and this may be a useful perspective in which to study less obviously subversive literature of the period. There were several reasons why the Comnenian system was not likely to appeal to intellectuals. It had driven a number of once prominent families into decline. It forced educated men to hang around the doors of the great, hoping to be taken on as fiscal clerks or household retainers. The rewards could be great, but the process was humiliating, and some authors complained loudly about having to eat the bread of servitude - not to mention those who complained about having no bread at all.<sup>81</sup> One of them, the 'Manganeios Prodromos', considered himself lucky to be able to end his days on a monastic adelphaton. Even those who rose high in the bureaucracy could not but be aware that they were a second-class aristocracy, considered inferior to men whose claims to distinction were their kinship and their ability to kill on horseback. Ill-feeling between the military and civil elites had been strong in the eleventh century, and there is no reason to believe that it disappeared after 1081. Theodore Prodromos lamented the fact that philosophy was not king in his day, but was subject to 'the money-making element' (to khrêmatistikôn) and, one manuscript adds, 'the military' (to stratiôtikon).<sup>82</sup> There were of course highly cultured Comneni with literary pretensions, notably Anna Comnena and

her brother Isaac, but the majority, including perhaps the emperors themselves, probably felt more at home in the philistine fantasy world of Digenes Akrites, a man's man who lived in the country, never met an intellectual, and devoted himself to sex and violence.<sup>83</sup>

Twelfth-century literati undoubtedly identified with the Comnenian elite to the extent that they played an important part in creating the Comnenian aristocratic mystique. In doing so, however, they were also building up the mystique of their own learned eloquence, and there can be no doubt which they took more seriously. To illustrate this point, we may compare two pieces of occasional rhetoric by Constantine Manasses. In his lament for Nicephorus Comnenus, epi tôn deêseôn, the grandson of Anna Comnena, Manasses is superlative and very long-winded in praise of Nicephorus' noble birth:

For he was born not of Pelops or Kekrops, base men and not really Hellenes but bastards and intruders, who being of low condition (tykhê), thought it a great thing to be enrolled among Hellenes. But (he was born) of a race composed of two heroic bloods, with purple and crimson coming together, one might say, in one, and weaving this most beautiful tapestry of birth.<sup>84</sup>

In his address to Michael Hagiotheodorites, logothete of the drome (and not one of the Comnenian nobility), Manasses wrote that while Michael was certainly not base-born, other things were more important:

for humble blood can increase and glorify the man who is not ill-intentioned or loose-living and make him more noble than Codrus .... Nobility is a gift of chance (tykhê), who plays this way and that, and gives to some like a mother, and turns her back on others like a stepmother. If a man shapes himself well all round, shuns evil, hates bad habits, and directs his life towards virtue, he has already accomplished everything and is indeed thrice-noble, not bastardised or counterfeit, but an original citizen of nobility.<sup>85</sup>

Is the combined effect of these passages to exalt the Comnenian ideal of nobility? Or is it to subvert this ideal? Manasses gives nothing away. But what he does say, quite unmistakably, is that it is his business as 'two-tongued rhetor' to stand up in public and say what is noble and what is not.

So we come back to rhetoric and bluff. Here, perhaps, is the essence of Byzantine snobbery, and here too is the decisive link between the intellectuals and the people. For both, the important thing was epideixis - showing off. Real, solid credentials were well and good, but they were useless without the ability to make an immediate impression. Status was created not only by establishing rights and securing assets, but also by scoring points in public encounters. In this, visible status-symbols like fine clothing and fat mules obviously carried weight. But perhaps even more important for Byzantines were self-confidence, presence of mind, and a ceaseless, intoxicating, bewildering flow of words.

In evaluating Byzantine social attitudes, we should pay atten-

tion not only to the words in which they are expressed, but also to the mood of the occasion to which they relate. In other words, we must try, as far as possible, to imagine Byzantine snobbery in action and in context. Fortunately, the sources do provide a few glimpses to aid our imagination. Here are three examples from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Firstly Kekaumenos, advising the man of private means that he should avoid incurring debts, because if he does, the creditor:

will find you in the market-place or in the praetorium or in church, and, wanting to show himself off to the people as being rich and better than you, he will say, "Man, what do I owe you that you hold on to my property? Do you want me to ruin you?" He says this to ruin you, and he knows that he has ruined you.<sup>86</sup>

Secondly, John Mauropous, in a letter defending himself against the charge of vainglory. His correspondent would do well to recall the episode in the previous year of the man who arrived at the palace with a crowd of attendants and carried in a litter - such was the man's softness and indolence. Then, walking in a dignified manner with the aid of a stick, as soon as he came within sight of the emperor he suddenly started to limp and moan, partly for the good reason that he had bruised his back-side, but it was mostly put on so that he might win compassion and be granted a highly-coveted seat. He went away carrying a big bag of gold, so having apparently arrived poor, he left rich, and behaved with even greater arrogance than before.<sup>87</sup>

Thirdly, Eustathios of Thessalonica, recalling a scene from his youth, in which his teacher went with a colleague and friend to a place outside Constantinople where both had estates. When they arrived they sat down on a pile of stones by the roadside under the shade of a spreading fig tree, and passed the time by telling stories and "philosophising off the cuff". Their intellectual sophistication (philosophos asteiotês) also prompted them to have some fun, so they started to mock the men who were travelling up and down the road, going about their business to earn a living. Some of the travellers who heard these witty taunts merely nodded a silent greeting and went on their way; others answered back politely and wittily, "though not without a certain rusticity". Others shouted back blasphemous insults, to the even greater amusement of the laughing philosophers.<sup>88</sup>

Asteiotês - literally 'urbanity', but also 'charm', 'wit', 'suavity', 'sophistication', 'civility' - was the Byzantine social grace par excellence.<sup>89</sup> In some ways it was the medieval Greek equivalent of courtoisie cortesia. But the two words reflect a world of cultural difference. The Byzantine courtier, being asteios, was also politikos, and had what Michael Psellos called a politikon phronêma. By this, Psellos meant not only a 'civic mentality', but also what we would call a 'bourgeois mentality': stuffy, conformist, and obsessed with appearances. As he said of the people who thought that his secretary was possessed because he was unkempt and made erratic gestures, they were

"politikoi in their manners, but not philosophoi in their thinking. For if they judge the nature of the soul from

dress and unkempt hair, they will have to conclude that only a small part of the inhabited world is in its right mind, and they must class the Scyths, Arabs, and Ethiopians, the majority of the Hellenes, and almost the whole barbarian world on the wrong side".

The word politikos had further connotations, as Kekaumenos felt bound to point out when he urged the grammatikos or philosophos to be oikonomikos and politikos:

I do not mean politikos in the sense of a mime or player, but I mean literally politikos, able to teach a whole polis how to do good works and expel evil from its midst, so that not only those who look at you may feel affection and respect for you, but also that those who listen to you may revere your virtue and wisdom.<sup>91</sup>

Kekaumenos might also have added that a politikê was a prostitute. Stuffy conformism and shameless exhibitionism: both were ineradicable features of the East Roman urban scene, and both were the very stuff of Byzantine snobbery. What Ševčenko has said of Metochites applies to every 'well born' Byzantine: "He did not have to be a perfect gentleman".<sup>93</sup>

NOTES

1. Ed. P. de Lagarde, Abhandlungen der Königlich Gesellschaft der Wissen-schaften zu Göttingen, 28 (Göttingen, 1882), 146.
2. Ed. K. Sathas, Mesaiōnikē Bibliothēkē, VII, 171.
3. Both types of snobbery can be seen in Theodore Prodromos' Complaints against Providence (Migne, PG, 133, 1335-7): the well-born, cultivated, defensive snob of reduced means deriding the aggressive snobbery of the nouveau riche.
4. M. - H. Fourmy - M. Leroy, 'La Vie de S. Philarète', 9 (1934), 85-170, especially 135, 137, 149.
5. M. Pselli Scripta Minora, ed. E. Kurtz, F. Drexl, I, 60ff; Theodore Metochites, Miscellanea, ed. C. G. Muller, Th. Kiesel (Leipzig, 1821), 220-6.
6. E.g. Symeon the New Theologian, Catachēses, ed. B. Krivochéine (Paris, 1963-5), I, 250-66; III, 188-90; La Vie de S. Cyrille le Philéote par Nicolas Kataskepenos, ed. E. Sargologos (Brussels, 1964), 149, 211ff; George Bourtzes, Metropolitan of Athens, Sermon on Thursday of Holy Week, ed. B. Georgiades (Athens, 1882), 34.
7. Notably in the discourse Peri kenodoxias, ed. A. M. Malingrey (Paris, 1972).
8. See, for example, Prodromos, op. cit. (above, n.3).
9. E.g. Leo of Synada, ed. J. Darrouzès, Epistoliers byzantins du Xe siècle (Paris, 1960), 180; John Mauropous, ed. Lagarde, no. 118, p. 64; Theodore Prodromos, Letter to Lizix, Migne, PG, 133, 1285-6; Michael Gabras, ed. G. Fatouros (Vienna, 1973), Letter 94.
10. Chrysostom, ed. Malingrey, 12-13; Psellos, Chronographia, ed. Renauld, II, 142.
11. For some Byzantine statements of this prejudice, see Symeon the Logothete, ed. Vasilievsky, VV 3 (1896), 578; Psellos, Scripta Minora, I, 69ff; Nikephoros Basilakes, ed. A. Garzya, Ep. Et. Byz. Sp., 36 (1968), 92-3; History of Ptocholeon, ed. G. Kechagioglou (Thessaloniki, 1978), Version A, lines 583ff, 742ff.
12. Eustathii opuscula, ed. G.L.F. Tafel (Frankfurt am Main, 1832), 129.
13. Ed. P.A.M. Leone, Ioannis Tzetzae historiae (Naples, 1968), 190-1; cf. P. Gautier, 'La curieuse ascendance de Jean Tzétzès', REB, 28 (1970), 207-20.
14. P. Gautier, 'La Diataxis de Michel Attaleiate', REB, 39 (1981), 21; Gregory of Cyprus, Autobiography, Migne, PG, 142, 24; idem, Epistolai, ed. S. Eustratiades (Alexandria, 1910), no.136, p.126.
15. Ed. Sathas, Mesaiōnikē Bibliothēkē, V, 9.
16. Cantacuzenus (Bonn), I, 25, 117; II, 89.
17. Gregoras (Bonn), I, 301; II, 577.
18. P. Magdalino, 'Byzantine Churches of Selymbria', DOP, 32 (1978), 311.
19. Epistulae, ed. P.A.M. Leone (Leipzig, 1972), 31-2.
20. Historiae, ed. Leone, Chillas VII, lines 295-301: p. 267.
21. Cf. S. Eyice, 'Alexis Apocauque et l'église byzantine de Selymbria', 34 (1964), 86-93; note in Ms. Kavsokalyvia no. 10, cited by J. A. Munitiz, Theognosti Thesaurus, Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, 5 (Turnhout, 1979), p. xl, from the catalogue by E. Kourilas (Paris, 1930).
22. G. Mercati, Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Calecae Teodoro Meletiniota, Studi e Testi, 56 (Rome, 1931), 466.
23. Parisinus gr. 2144, fols. 10v-11r. Some of the verses are printed in the notes to the second volume of the Bonn edition of Gregoras' history (pp. 1256-8).
24. Miscellanea, loc cit. (above n. 5). It is possible, of course, that here, as in the polemic between Metochites and Choumnos, the allusion is simply to one person: I. Ševčenko, Études sur la polémique entre Théodore Métochite et Nicéphore Choumnos (Brussels, 1962), 33, 174.
25. S. Krawczynski, O Poulologos (Berlin, 1960); V. Tsiouni, Paidiophrastos Diēgāsis tōn zōōn tōn tetrapodōn (Munich, 1972).
26. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Synodal Letters of John Apokaukos, Metropolitan of Naupaktos', Byzantis, 1 (1909), no. 3, p. 15. For the Apokaukoi in the eleventh century, see A. P. Kazhdan, Sotsialnyj sostav gosподstvjushchego klassa Vizantii XI-XII vv. (Moscow, 1974), 149-50.
27. Ibid., Chapter 2, especially 61ff.
28. Iohannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in Lodice Vaticano graeco 676 supersunt, ed. P. de Lagarde (Göttingen, 1882), p. 210.
29. Ed. Sathas, Mesaiōnikē Bibliothēkē, V. 63.
30. Michael Attaleiates (Bonn), p. 288.



31. Ed. S. Kyriakides, La espugnazione di Tessalonica (Palermo, 1961), 56.
32. Niketas Choniates, Historia, ed. J. L. Van Dieten (Berlin/New York, 1975), 296.
33. Ed. A. Markopoulos, Ep. Et. Byz. Spoud., 36 (1968), 113.
34. Pachymeres (Bonn), I, 33.
35. Ed. Ševčenko, ZRVI 6 (1960), 210.
36. A. Laiou, 'The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Palaiologan Period', Viator, 4 (1973), 131ff; Kazhdan, Sotsialnyj sostav, Chapters 1, 2, 4.
37. Ed. L. Deubner, Kosmas und Damian (Leipzig, 1907), 193.
38. Eustathios, ed. Kyriakides, 44-6; Theodore Balsamon, Minge, PG, 138, col. 713.
39. G. Ferrari, 'Formulari notarili inediti dell'età bizantina', Bullettino del Istituto Storico Italiano, 33 (1913), 59-62 (= Scritti Giuridici, I, (Milan, 1953), 19-22). Western notarial usage of the term *nobilis* was similarly restricted at this time: G. Constable, 'The Structure of Mediaeval Society according to the Dictatores of the Twelfth Century', in Law, Church, and Society. Essays in Honour of Stephen Kuttner, ed. K. Pennington and R. Somerville (Pennsylvania State University, 1977), 253-67.
40. Chomatenos, ed. J. Pitra, Analecta sacra et classica spicilegio Solesmensi parata, VII (Rome, 1891), passim but especially 49-50, 543, 546. Characteristic of late Byzantine attitudes is Cantacozenus' reference to Sphrantzes Palaiologos - a member of the imperial clan, but not closely related to the emperor - as "one of the senatorial class, but not really one of those distinguished for nobility" (II, p. 451).
41. Theophilos, Ta Institouta, I.3.5, 4.1; Justinian, Novels 78 and 123 (Basilika III.1.32, XXXII.1.3); Attaleiates, Ponema, I.2; Synopsis Minor, V.I; Peira, XVII.14, XLIX.25.
42. Ed. P. Lemerle, Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin (Paris, 1977), 27.
43. Basilika VI.1.26.
44. A.- J. Festugière, Vie de Theodore de Sykéon (Brussels, 1970), I, 138ff.

45. Peira, XXX.2, 11; cf. Justinian, Novel 90, and a novel of the empress Eirene, ed. L. Burgmann, Fontes Minores 4 (Frankfurt, 1981), 20, 30 n. 66. On the Romano-Byzantine tradition of social discrimination at law, see P. Garnsey, Social Status and Legal Privilege in the Roman Empire (Oxford, 1970); M. A. Tourtoglou, 'Koinōnikai tines epidraseis epi to Byzantinon dikaion', Epetēris tou Kentrou Ereunēs tēs Historias tou Hel-lēnikou Dikaïou, 12 (1965: Athens, 1968), 169-98.
46. Ed. H. Delehaye, Les saints stylites (Brussels, 1923), 200.
47. See, for example, the passages of Attaleiates and Theodore Laskaris cited above, nn. 30, 33.
48. Ed. S. Lagopates, Germanos Ho B' Patriarkhēs (Tripolis, 1913), 282-3.
49. Ed. M. Treu, BZ, 8 (1899), 5; cf. Miscellanea, p. 468; and Eustathios of Thessalonica on the Turkish occupation of Asia Minor: "the noble and Hellenic element was removed, and the ill-born and barbarian element was introduced in its place" (ed. W. Regel, Fontes rerum byzantinorum, I, (St. Petersburg, 1892), 65).
50. J. Darrouzès, Georges et Dēmētrios Tornikēs, Lettres et discours (Paris, 1970), 129, 235; Choniates, Historia, ed. Van Dieten, 205, 209; Nicholas Mesarites, Die Palastrevolution des Johannes Komnenos, ed. A. Heisenberg (Wurzburg, 1907), 39.
51. See Inferno, XV, 61ff, where Dante, through the mouth of Brunetto Latini, exalts the 'native' Roman element in Florence and laments its contamination by immigration in his own time.
52. I. Ševčenko, 'Theodore Metochites, the Chora, and the intellectual trends of his time', The Kariye Djami, ed. P. Underwood, IV (Princeton, 1975), 25-6.
53. Basilika, VI.1.23; see below, n. 75.
54. Ševčenko, op. cit., 47-8.
55. C. Wendel, in Pauly-Wissowa, Realencyclopädie, VII A 2 (1948), 1961; cf. Historiae, ed. Leone, Chiliad XI, lines 13ff.
56. Michaēl Akominatou Choniatoi ta Sōzōmena, ed. Lampros (Athens, 1879), I, 9.
57. Ed. Heisenberg (Leipzig, 1896), 73; see J. A. Munitiz, 'Self-Canonisation: the "Partial Account" of Nikephoros Blemmydes', The Byzantine Saint, ed. S. Hackel (London, 1981), 164-8.
58. I.e. the author of Kallimachos and Chrysorrhoe, probably the son of the sebastokrator Constantine Palaiologos: D.I. Polemis, The Doukai (London 1968), no. 150.



59. Niketas Choniates, 233-4, 392-3, 456, 523-4, 562, 594. Cf. also "Manganeios Prodromos", ed. S. Bernardinello, *Theodori Prodromi De Manganis* (Padua, 1973), no. 12, lines 147ff; John Diogenes, ed. Regel, *Fontes*, II, 305-6; Mesarites, *Palastrevolution*, 22.
60. *Manuelis Philae carmina*, ed. E. Miller, I (Paris, 1855), 170.
61. I.e. a bird with borrowed plumes: cf. *Poulologos*, ed. Krawczynski, lines 271ff.
62. H. - G. Beck, 'Konstantinopel. Zur Sozialgeschichte einer fruhmittelalterlichen Hauptstadt', *BZ*, 58 (1965), 20ff.
63. Niketas Choniates, 234, line 2.
64. *Peira*, LI.7, in Zepos, *Ius*, IV, p. 213.
65. Tzetzes, *Epistulae*, ed. Leone, no. 83, p. 124.
66. Ibid., no. 57, pp. 81-2; anonymous verses, ed. Lampros, *Neos Hellênomnêôn*, 8 (1911), 156-7; Mesarites, *Palastrevolution*, ed. Heisenberg, 22, 26.
67. Tzetzes, *Epistulae*, ed. Leone, pp. 32-3; Constantine Manasses, ed. K. Horna, *BZ*, 13 (1904), 344. Cf. also Eustathios' evocative denunciations of greed and hypocrisy (ed. Tafel, 97, 242, 245, 258-9; Scor. gr. Y-II-10, fol. 55v); his numerous comments on details of everyday life (collected by Ph. Koukoules, *Thessalonikês Eustathiou ta laographika*, 2 vols (Athens, 1950); and the passages of risqué gossip in Choniates' history (ed. Van Dieten, 322, 441-2, 520).
68. Tzetzes, *Epistulae*, ed. Leone, pp. 26, 97.; Prodromos, Migne, PG 133, 1286; Michael Choniates, loc. cit. (above, n. 56).
69. Scor. gr. Y-II-10, fols. 360r. (Eustathios), 515r; Eustathios, ed. Tafel, 223, 246; Manasses, *Chronicle* (Bonn), p. 285, lines 6705ff; idem, ed. Horna, *Wiener Studien*, 28 (1906), 182; Tzetzes, *Epistulae*, ed. Leone, p. 85; *Timarion*, ed. R. Romano, 54-5; Prodromos, Migne, PG 133, 1326, 1335 (cf. Michael Haploucheir, ed. Leone, *Byzantion*, 39 (1969), 271); 'Ptochoprodromos', ed. D.C. Hesseling and H. Pernot, *Poèmes prodromiques en grec vulgaire* (Amsterdam, 1910), no. 4; Mesarites, *Palastrevolution*, ed. Heisenberg, 38; Choniates, ed. Van Dieten, 349. Cf. Koukoules, op. cit. (above, n. 67), I, 391ff.
70. *Eustathii opuscula*, ed. Tafel, 329.
71. See, e.g., Prodromos, Migne, PG 133, 1265; Tzetzes, 'Iambi', ed. Leone, *Rivista di studi bizantinisti neoellenici*, N.S., 67 (1969-70), 135ff; cf. Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 204 n. 25. On logos as tekhnê in Ancient Greece, see J. de Romilly, *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), chapters 3-4.
72. Prodromos, Migne, PG 133, 1336-7; Nicholas Kataphloron in Scor. gr. Y-II-10, fols. 325r, 326v.
73. Byzantine writers echoed Isocrates' claim that logos was the sine qua non of civic life: e.g. Kekaumenos, ed. Litavrin (Moscow, 1972), 132 (Wassiliewsky-Jernstedt, 8-9); Michael Italikos, ed. P. Gautier (Paris, 1972), 139-40. Eustathios, in Scor. gr. Y-II-10, fol. 357 r.-v. Cf. Isocrates, *Nicocles*, 5-9; *Antidosis*, 253-7; de Romilly, op. cit., 52ff.
74. R. Browning in *Past and Present*, 69 (1975), 3ff; Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, chapters 4-5; C. Mango, *Byzantium* (London, 1980), 142, 246.
75. Attaleiates, *Diataxis*, loc. cit. (above, n. 14); Psellos, ed. Sathas, *Mesaiônîkê Bibliothêkê*, IV, 430-1; V, 108-9; *Scripta minora*, edd. Kurtz-Drexler, I, 22; ed. G. Weiss, *Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos* (Munich, 1973), 269; Psellos, *Chronographia*, ed. Renauld, I, 132; II, 35, 145. Cf. Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 287-93.
76. Novel 23, ed. Zepos, *IUS*, I, 645; Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 291-2. The passage of Eustathios cited earlier (above, n. 12) would seem to confirm that such promotion was normal in the twelfth century.
77. A good example is Prodromos's poem on the birth of Alexius Comnenus, ed. W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos. Historische Gedichte* (Vienna, 1974), no. xlii, p. 406ff.
78. A. Kazhdan, *Kniga i pisatelj v Vizantii* (Moscow, 1973), 98; *Sotsialnyj sostav*, 42-6.
79. Niketas Choniates, 204, 529.
80. M. Alexiou, 'Literary subversion and the aristocracy; a stylistic analysis of *Timarion* Chapters 6-7' *BMGS*, 8 (1983), pp. 29-45.
81. "Manganeios Prodromos", ed. Bernardinello, poems 1-5, 7; Gregory Antiochos, in Scor. gr. Y-II-10, fol. 401; Eustathios, ibid., fol. 360. Cf. Kazhdan, *Sotsialnyj sostav*, 238-40; idem, *Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1984), 203 ff.
82. Migne, PG 133, col. 1318.
83. It has recently been argued that the poem is essentially a twelfth century romance: N. Oikonomides, *TM*, 7 (1979), 393ff; E. M. Jeffreys, 50 (1980), 484.
84. Ed. E. Kurtz, *VV*, 17 (1910), 305.
85. Ed. K. Horna, *Wiener Studien*, 28 (1906), 176-7. Cf. Kazhdan, *Sotsialnyj sostav*, 48.
86. Kekaumenos, ed. Litavrin, 190 (Wassilewsky-Jernstedt, 37).

87. Maupous, ed. Lagarde, no. 118, p. 64.
88. Eustathii opuscula, ed. Tafel, 111-2.
89. Cf. Beck, 'Konstantinopel', 25.
90. Psellos, Scripta minora, edd. Kurtz-Drexl, I, 60-1.
91. Kekaumenos, ed. Litavrin, 132 (Wassiliewsky-Jernstedt, 8-9).
92. Ph. Koukoules, Byzantinôn bios kai politismos, II, part 2, 124.
93. Ševčenko, 'Theodore Metochites' (see above, n. 52), 55.

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## CHAPTER 5 - THE PROSOPOGRAPHY OF THE BYZANTINE ARISTOCRACY

Donald Nicol

The Encyclopaedia Britannica describes Prosopography as 'a fruitful technique' in the furtherance of classical scholarship. As a technical term it has a short history. Du Cange compiled a list of what he called the *Familiae Augustae*, with short biographical sketches of the members of each family and the genealogical links that bound them together. In more recent years prosopography has become recognised as one of the *instrumenta studiorum* for Romanists and for Byzantinists. The monumental Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire lists all members of the leading Roman families up to the year 641. Byzantinists can now benefit from special studies of some twenty aristocratic families (Argyros, Asen, Cantacuzenus, Choumnos, Dermokaites, Doukas, Gabras, Kabakes, Kabasilas, Maliasenos, Palaiologos, Philanthropenos, Pleustes, Raoul, Skleros, Synadenos, Tagaris, Tarkhanelotes, Tornikes, Tzamlakon); while for the later period there are now six fascicules of the Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit.

It may be significant that Roman and Byzantine prosopography are within our capabilities. A prosopography of the ancient Greek world would be much harder to achieve. So also would a prosopographical study of the Ottoman Empire. That is not to say that the Oxford Classical Dictionary and the Encyclopedia of Islam do not provide adequate biographical sketches of important persons. But it is often very difficult to establish the family links between those persons. Prosopography and genealogy (and the two are complementary) depend on a rather Roman concept of the family, with a *paterfamilias* at its head, but also with a wife and mother who has certain rights and a family name of her own. The ancient Greeks, who took life with less *dignitas* and *gravitas*, also took less trouble to record their inter-marriages. We know the name of Socrates's wife, because she was a famous shrew, and of Pericles's mistress; but we do not know the names of their grandchildren. The ancient Greeks, for all their obsession with the horrors of the house of Atreus, seem not to have shared the Roman or the Jewish longing to achieve personal immortality through procreation.

Upperclass Romans looked to their young to carry on the torch of a Julius or a Claudius. So they kept family records, they carved inscriptions, made tombstones and copied busts taken from the death-masks of their ancestors. The Ottomans on the other hand had a well-developed sense of the male line of succession; but they paid little attention to recording or naming the wives of the progenitors of those males; and their rulers had so many wives. A glance at Alderson's Structure of the Ottoman Dynasty will soon demonstrate how very hard it often is to decide who were the antecedents of a Turkish

prince in the female line. One Byzantine example must suffice: the youngest of the six sons of the emir Orkhan by his various marriages was Halil. He was captured by Genoese pirates off the coast of Asia Minor in 1356. The incident led to war and to the payment of a ransom by the Emperor John V which he could ill afford.<sup>2</sup> Halil was then betrothed to John's ten-year old daughter Eirene.<sup>2</sup> But who was Halil's mother? She might well have been Theodora, daughter of John Cantacuzene, who had married Orkhan in 1346. But we are not told. The identification of Halil's mother would help to explain the motives behind his kidnapping.

The Romans then had a more developed sense of genealogy than the Greeks. The Byzantines, being both Greek and Roman, come in a special category. It is arguable that they did not have the sense of hereditary aristocracy in families that one finds in Roman, or in western feudal society. There were the eugeneis,<sup>3</sup> there was the 'golden line of noble birth', as Pachymeres puts it.<sup>3</sup> But nobility had no legal definition. Nor was it hereditary in the sense that the title held by a nobleman passed to his heirs. Byzantine nobles were de facto nobles, in contrast to the de iure nobility of the west. The growing adoption of surnames and patronymics in and after the 9th century illustrates the point. It became the fashion among those who were unsure even of their de facto position in Byzantine society because they were outsiders. Emperors like Justinian, Heraclius or Leo III did not need to identify themselves by advertising their clan. In the 9th and 10th centuries, however, the need was felt by the great clans of Phokas, Skleros, Maleinos and Doukas. These families, as Mango has observed, introduced a new aristocratic ideal. Most of them came from Armenia where such tribal affiliations were significant. But they invented or discovered ancient lineage for themselves in more respectable quarters. The Phokas family claimed to be descended from the Fabii, the Doukas family from a cousin of Constantine the Great. These claims were about as sensible as those of the later Cantacuzeni that they were descended from one of Trajan's generals or from one of Charlemagne's peers; or the tale put about by refugee Palaiologoi in Italy that they came from Viterbo, because Palaios Logos is the Greek for Vetus Verbum. On the other hand, there is little evidence for the cult of emperors in Byzantium, for the building of imperial mythologies in or after their lifetimes, such as occurred in Serbia and Bulgaria. Constantine was of course canonised. John Vatatzes of Nicaea became a local saint; so also did Theodora of Arta. But these are exceptions.

The value of prosopography for the historian is that it enables him to know as much as possible of the bare facts about a given prosopon or person, about his background, his antecedents and his offspring. This can sometimes lead to new interpretations. To take one example, there is the case of John Cantacuzenus. Earlier genealogists like Du Cange believed that he had a brother and a sister. There is no evidence for their existence. It seems clear that the future Emperor John VI had no siblings, that he was born just after his father's death and that he was an only child brought up by his mother. These facts tell us something about the public image of the man, his prosopon. They may even explain some of the peculiarities of his character and so of his career. That he was a mother's boy may account for his religiosity, even for his deviousness and indecisive nature. But this is not the business of the

prosopographer. He must stick to the laborious task of supplying the factual evidence on which the interpreters can erect their historical structure. He cannot and must not stretch that evidence. And the evidence for John Cantacuzenus is sadly lacking. His antecedents on his father's side are totally obscure, and on his mother's side not much better. His mother Theodora was known by the names of Palaiologina Angelina Cantacuzena. It is safe to assume that she got her last name from her husband rather than from her father. But no one knows how she came to be connected with the families of Angelos and Palaiologos. Various authorities have connected her also with the family of Tarkhaneiotes, a name which she seems not to have borne. But this is pure guesswork; and guesswork has no place in prosopography.<sup>4</sup>

The use and abuse of family names by the Byzantine aristocracy creates many problems. In England one assumes that a man called Grace-Groundling-Marchpole is descended from and incorporates those three families in his prosopon. The double or triple-barrelled name indicates a marriage of properties as well as of persons. On the other hand, it is regular English practice to express one's indebtedness to grandparents or uncles by adopting their Christian or forenames rather than their surnames, such as Charles Augustus Fortescue. The American use of the terms Jr. and Sr., or Henry Ford I, II and III makes things simpler for the genealogist. Another helpful practice is that used in Greece today, describing someone as 'the son of such and such a father'. Michael Doukas, founder of the separatist state in Epiros in 1204, is frequently described in the sources as 'Michael, son of the sebastokrator John Doukas'. But in later Byzantine times top people were in the habit of carrying long strings of names, all of them surnames or family names, and not necessarily in any accepted order of succession or precedence. The nearest parallel to this practice may perhaps be found again in Roman usage. This is instructive because, as Günter Weiss has observed, the structure of late Byzantine upper class society was in many ways very similar to that of the last century of the Roman Republic or early Empire.<sup>5</sup> In Rome, when a man called himself Quintus Fabius Maximus, it clearly indicated that he belonged to the family of Maximus and to the gens or clan of Fabius; so also with Publius Cornelius Scipio. In Byzantium, when a man calls himself Theodore Doukas Laskaris, one can assume that Laskaris is his family name inherited from his father. But one cannot unfortunately assume that Doukas is the name of his gens or clan; indeed one cannot make any universal assumptions about the use of such middle names in the Byzantine aristocracy.

The rules of the game in this late Byzantine name-dropping are hard to follow. One of them is fairly consistently applied, however. The members of a ruling imperial dynasty regularly employ the family name of Comnenus, Angelos, Laskaris or whatever, and regularly put that name last on the list, qualifying it with the definite article (e.g. Alexios ... pistos basileus kai autokrator Romaion ho Komnenos). Some such dynastic names seem to have acquired almost the status of titles, like that of Megas Komnenos in Trebizond, or like the name Stefan applied to all the Serbian kings of the Nemanjid dynasty, or Ivan to the Bulgarian kings. Manuel II made someone what he called a 'Kantakouzenatos of the blood', evidently conferring some sort of honorary entitlement to membership of the Cantacuzenus family.<sup>6</sup> But even among members of imperial families the order and

the choice of the middle names which they employ seem to defy regular classification; and among the lesser fry of the aristocracy things were even more haphazard. Take, for example, the case of the rulers of Epiros in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The founder of the separatist state of Epiros, Michael I, was the illegitimate son of John Doukas, who was the son of Constantine Angelos and Theodora Comnena. Michael therefore had access, if not right (since he was a bastard), to the three names of Angelos Komnenos and Doukas. But his father John is always called by the single name of Doukas in the sources; and Michael himself is sometimes called Michael Doukas, sometimes Michael Comnenus, but hardly ever Michael Angelos. George Akropolites does not dignify him with any surname; but this is just spite. His admirers, the bishops John Apokaukos and Demetrios Chomatianos, preferred to call him Comnenus. He himself seems to have opted for the name Doukas. His more famous half-brother, Theodore, who made himself emperor at Thessalonica, preferred to call himself Comnenus and Doukas; Chomatianos, who crowned him, even calls him Megas Komnenos. The son of Michael I and nephew of Theodore, Michael II of Epiros, most often used the single name of Doukas, though sometimes the compound form of Kommenodoukas; only his detractors call him Angelos. His legitimate son Nicephorus, on the other hand, is never credited with any surname in the extant Greek sources; though the Latins knew him as Comnenus and Doukas. Michael's illegitimate son John, the celebrated bastard of Thessaly, is regularly called John Doukas or John the sebastokrator; but his wife, who was a Vlach, is called Comnena Doukaina.

It would be nice to think that something could be learnt about Byzantine laws of inheritance or of succession from the surnames adopted by such families. The accumulation of long strings of names seems to be a late Byzantine phenomenon; and the later the date the more important it appears to have been for some people, who were perhaps a little unsure of their social status, to include as many famous names as possible. Thus one finds the Serbian Emperor at Trikkala in Thessaly in the 1370s calling himself John Angelos Comnenus Doukas Uroš Palaiologos; or the otherwise unknown son of the Bulgarian tsar Smilec (died 1294) calling himself John Comnenus Doukas Angelos Branas Palaiologos; or, best of all, an obscure 15th-century gentleman, whose name appears only on an icon, called John Doukas Angelos Palaiologos Raoul Laskaris Tornikes Philanthropenos Asanes. One can only assume that he was in some way connected with each one of these noble families; but the order in which he sets out their names remains obscure.

A set piece for the study of Byzantine prosopography and genealogy is the Lincoln College Typikon. This is the foundation charter of the Convent of Our Lady of Good Hope (Bebai Elpis) in Constantinople. It contains the names and better still the portraits of the foundress, of her parents, her husband, their children and their grandchildren. It is an object lesson in the accumulation of aristocratic names in high Byzantine circles. But it leaves one in the dark about how those names were properly employed or acquired. The foundress was Theodora, the nun Theodoule, daughter of Constantine Palaiologos, the brother of Michael VIII. Theodora's mother was called Eirene. Her portrait lists her surnames as Comnena Branaina Palaiologina, in that order; but in the text of the Typikon she is described as Branaina Comnena Laskarina Cantacuzena Palaiologina, in

that order. Theodora married John Angelos Comnenus Synadenos. At the very outset therefore we have nine of the leading Byzantine families involved in this foundation. But only the names of Palaiologos, Comnenus, Doukas and Synadenos were carried on by Theodora's sons. One of them, Theodore, married the daughter of one Theodore Mouzakios, but that name was quickly dropped, presumably because it was not grand enough. The other son, John, however, did rather better for himself. He married a lady (Thomais) with the names Comnena Doukaina Laskarina Cantacuzena and Palaiologina; and all these names were adopted by her daughters - though they, as it happens, acquired yet more surnames by their respective marriages. Her daughter Anna, for example, was born Cantacuzena Comnena Palaiologina, and added the names of Bryenissa and Philanthropene by marrying Michael Laskaris Bryennios Philanthropenos. She had dropped the name of Synadene, which she had from her father, and that of Laskarina, which she had from her mother. One does not know why she did so, except that she probably had to draw the line somewhere.

One prosopographical lesson to be learnt from this remarkable document is that, in the last centuries of the empire, the leading Byzantine families were obsessed with the perpetuation of their own species by intermarriage. Eighteen descendants of Constantine Palaiologos, brother of Michael VIII, through four generations, are listed in the Lincoln College Typikon. All of them had by birth or by marriage three or more surnames drawn from fourteen families; and only one of those families, that of Mouzakios, could be described as being 'obscure' or 'of undistinguished origin'. The Typikon is a splendid and vivid advertisement for the late Byzantine obsession for name collecting among the aristocracy. Again one is reminded of the society of the late Roman Republic and early Empire. Caius Octavius, later Augustus, was a grandnephew of Julius Caesar, and so a Julian. He married, as his second wife, Scribonia, who was connected through her father with the family of Pompey. He married, as his third wife, Livia Drusilla, who was descended from the Claudii and the Livii and was the widow of a Claudius Nero. It was much the same sort of rat-race among the very few top families, to stay on top by producing joint-stock companies in the form of joint issue.

The Byzantines had a strongly developed sense of family and family connexions. But a man would seldom trace his ancestry back for more than about three generations. The imperial family and aristocracy in exile at Nicaea or Epiros after 1204 liked to claim links with the great ruling families of Doukas and Comnenus. But Andronikos II dropped them all in favour of the single surname of Palaiologos. Encomiasts of emperors sometimes allude to their illustrious forbears, but this is a rhetorical device. Gregory of Cyprus, for instance, praises the ancestors of Michael VIII, but only in general terms and without naming any one of them.<sup>8</sup> Nicholas Kabasilas likewise extols the ancestry of Matthew Cantacuzenus in the following words: 'You whose ancestors were emperors, whose grandfathers were the sons of emperors, more blessed and finer by far than the sons of Aiakos ... whose parents were emperors better and more wonderful than all the emperors'. But he does not mention a single name. Demetrios Kydones goes on in much the same vein about John Cantacuzenus's marvellous ancestors, and then a few years later, when he had changed his political affiliations, about those of John V.<sup>9</sup> But it is all hot air. Steven Runciman and others have remarked that

the Byzantines, especially in Constantinople, lived in a more or less constant state of nervous tension. Perhaps this caused them to live for the moment. They had a sense of tradition, because tradition meant security of a kind. But they had a deeper sense that real security was only to be found in the life beyond the grave. Another lesson of the Lincoln College Typikon is that it was important to have plenty of joint issue to pray for your soul when you were gone.

A helpful rule of thumb in Byzantine genealogy is that grandsons would usually, though not invariably, take the Christian names of their grandfathers. Thus Michael IX was the grandson of Michael VIII; Andronikos III of Andronikos II; Theodore II Laskaris of Theodore I. Otherwise, the Greek terms for parenthood, brotherhood, sisterhood, wife and husband are generally clear enough in the texts. But the Byzantines had a maddeningly indeterminate view of the more extended relationships in their very extended families. The words for cousin and nephew, for instance, are sometimes interchangeable; the word for son-in-law can mean a number of things; and the words for uncle and aunt have such wide connotations that one loses track of the generations with which one is dealing.

Some examples may illustrate the problem:-

1. the words for nephew and cousin (anepsios and exadelphos): John Angelos, who flourished in the 1340s, is variously described in the sources as a relative of John Cantacuzenus, sometimes as a 'close relation', sometimes as a cousin, a first cousin, or a nephew. Cantacuzenus, who should have known, calls him his exadelphos on one occasion and his anepsios on eleven occasions. Gregoras describes him as the emperor's 'first cousin'.<sup>10</sup> One has to conclude that the words for cousin and nephew were interchangeable.
2. the word gambros (= son-in-law) can mean, literally, the husband of a man's daughter; but also, by extension, it can mean a brother-in-law (i.e. husband of a man's sister or brother of his wife); and again it can mean an uncle acquired by marriage (i.e. the husband of an aunt on one's father's side). Lucien Stiernon worked out for the court of the Comneni in the 12th century a kind of palace pecking order in which, it is clear, the appellation of gambros constitutes a rank or class. The emperor heads the list; then come the sebastokrators, who include the sons, brothers, paternal uncles and grandpaternal uncles of the emperor and their wives; next come the gambroi of the emperor, who include his sons-in-law and by extension his brothers-in-law. And each gambros has his proper rank: the husband of the emperor's eldest daughter is Caesar, of his second daughter panhypersebastos, of his third proto-sebastohypertatos, and of his 4th (the 'benjamine') sebastohypertatos. Finally, there is a distinction between those who are papsebastos sebastos gambros and those who are gambros alone.<sup>11</sup>

In the De Officiis of Pseudo-Kodinos, the word gambros is employed to mean almost any close relative by marriage of the emperor. The text begins by saying: 'The sons of

the emperor, the Despots, take precedence over the brothers and gambroi of the emperor, even though they too are Despots'.<sup>12</sup> Gambros therefore comes to denote not only a son-in-law and a brother-in-law, but also any outsider marrying a close relative of the emperor, such as a granddaughter, a niece, a grandniece, a cousin or a cousin once removed.

3. The words theios or theia meaning uncle or aunt. These too are employed in what to our minds is a very wide and almost arbitrary manner. The word uncle can mean far more than the simple relationship between a child and its father's or its mother's brother. It is used also to denote the degree of affinity existing between the child of an uncle and the child of the nephew, as if the son of your uncle Tom Copley were the uncle of your own son Harry. The matter can even be taken into a third generation, so that the grandson of an uncle is designated as the uncle of a grandnephew. Sometimes this relationship is so tenuous and so far removed as to be almost indistinguishable from the relationship implied by such words as oikeios; and sometimes too the word theios is used, as we would say, of a 'courtesy' uncle, to indicate a specially privileged member of the family. For example, Alexios Philanthropenos and Theodore Synadenos are both called 'uncles' of Andronikos III,<sup>13</sup> though in fact there was no direct affinity between them.

Such imprecise use of technical terms for family relationships bedevils the task of the prosopographer. But a more prevalent problem is the haphazard nature of the documentary or other evidence for a particular person. All too often a man who was clearly important in his day, perhaps a gambros or a theios of an emperor, is mentioned only once or twice in the documents that happen to be available. He may once have gone on an embassy or have commanded an army. Often too there are considerable gaps in the history of a particular family; and even in the 14th century new families emerge into prominence and make it to the top. The Apokaukos family may exemplify the first of these categories. Early in the fourteenth century the famous Alexius Apokaukos suddenly hits the headlines, apparently dragged out of the gutter by John Cantacuzenus. He is presented in the literary sources as a man of humble if not despicable origins. Yet a hundred years earlier the family of Apokaukos had produced one of the most learned of Byzantine bishops, John of Naupaktos; and in 1342 there was a George Apokaukos with the rank of megas droungarios, a theios of the emperor.<sup>14</sup> New families of wealth and influence are typified by those of Kydones and Metochites. These are new names in the 14th century. We know quite a lot about the father of Theodore Metochites and something about the father of Demetrios Kydones; but of their earlier antecedents we know nothing. It would be interesting to know more about the sons of Theodore Metochites, two of whom clearly reacted against their father and suffered from a generation gap. But when the end came in 1453 there was one distinguished member of their family in Constantinople, the last megas stratopedarches of Byzantium, Demetrios Palaiologos Metochites.<sup>15</sup> Two of the most poignant and revealing documents that have survived are the passenger lists of refugees taken aboard Genoese ships at Constantinople on 29 May 1453. They include the names of some very



aristocratic rats leaving the sinking ship. But it is hard to identify them and harder still to prosopographise them. They include five Palaiologoi, two Cantacuzeni, two Laskarids, as well as a number of members of less celebrated families, among them two Notarades. But there is no means of knowing, for example, how the Blasios and Matthaïos Notaras, who escaped on one of the ships, were related to the famous Loukas Notaras, who did not escape and was executed with most of his family by the Sultan Mehmed.<sup>16</sup>

Sometimes there is a vital link missing in the chain of family relationship, which could only be supplied by further evidence of a prosopographical nature. To take one instance from the family of Cantacuzenus: Matthew Cantacuzenus, son of John VI, had five children, two sons and three daughters. The sons were called John and Demetrios and both lived most of their lives in the Morea. Their uncle Manuel, who had been Despot in the Morea since 1349, died in 1380. One of them, either John or Demetrios, at once claimed the succession for the Cantacuzenus family and waged war against Theodore Palaiologos, who had been sent out from Constantinople to take over. The only evidence for this incident is the Funeral Oration for Theodore Palaiologos composed in 1407 by his brother, the Emperor Manuel II. But this is a document composed in the purest rhetorical style and therefore names no names. On the balance of probability it has been assumed, by myself and by others, that the rebellious "cousin" of Theodore Palaiologos, who died in 1384, was Demetrios rather than John Cantacuzenus. But there is no substantial proof.<sup>17</sup>

Now, in the next generation there is documentary evidence for six members of the Cantacuzenus family, three brothers and three sisters, who played an important part in affairs in the Morea, in Constantinople, in Serbia, in Trebizond and even in Georgia. But who was the father of this brood? Demetrios Cantacuzenus seemed the most likely candidate, since they are known to have been "grandchildren" of Matthew and so the offspring of one of his children. But H. Hunger has since proposed that their father was in fact one Theodore Cantacuzenus, a correspondent of John Khortasmenos and an "uncle" of Manuel II, who died of the plague in 1410.<sup>18</sup> There are quite good reasons why this might be true. But it means that one has to admit the existence of a hitherto unknown third son of Matthew Cantacuzenus and grandson of John VI, by name Theodore; and this, given the fairly full information that we have about at least the names of the emperor's immediate family, seems a bold assumption. (One observes that the *Prosopographisches Lexikon* does not enshrine Hunger's theory as fact).<sup>19</sup> Here then is a large lacuna in the succession of a leading Byzantine family in midstream.

There are other and more celebrated cases, for example, that of the princess Theophano, who married Otto II of Germany in 972. German scholars, almost ever since, have been writing articles entitled "Wer war Theophano?" The lady herself said that she was a daughter of Romanos II, a granddaughter of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, and so a great-great-granddaughter of Basil I. In fact she claimed to be the porphyrogenita or blueblooded princess that Otto had asked for. But in the diploma announcing the marriage she is called "the niece of John Tzimiskes"; and a nearly contemporary German chronicler, ready to believe that all the Greeks were treacherous, said that Otto had been deceived but had decided to put a good face on it. Jenkins

remarked that there is here no problem, because the "daughter of Romanos II and the niece of John Tzimiskes" are simply two different ways of saying the same thing. So they might be; but as Steven Runciman pointed out, in his review of Jenkins, this would mean that we have here the only recorded case in Byzantine history of a daughter having the same name as her mother, for Theophano's mother would also be called Theophano. This shows how careful one has to be.<sup>20</sup>

I said earlier that prosopography provides the bare facts for historians to interpret, the structure round which they can build their bricks. Two examples must suffice to show how this might be done. The first comes from the thirteenth the second from the fourteenth century. In 1260, after the battle of Pelagonia, Michael VIII published a New Year's Honours list. His brothers John and Constantine were raised to the ranks of Despot and *sebastokrator* respectively. Alexius Strategopoulos was made Caesar; Constantine Tornikes, the emperor's *sympentheros*, was also made *sebastokrator* (though with a difference). Also honoured in various ways were John Raoul, Alexius Philes, Balanidiotes, Alexius Philanthropenos and one Angelos. Of these, the first three had been persecuted by Michael VIII's predecessor, Theodore II Laskaris; and all of them had married into the Palaiologos family. The only newcomer was Alexius Philanthropenos. The only old stagers were Alexius Strategopoulos and Michael Laskaris, both elderly and both honoured presumably as a sop to Laskarid sentiment. Prosopographical study of these exalted gentlemen reveals to what an extent Michael VIII gathered men around him who were fat. It also reveals that all but two of them were either dead or disgraced and in prison fifteen years later.<sup>21</sup>

The second example of the uses of prosopography has to do with the Zealot revolution in Thessalonica between the years 1342 and 1350. Much has been written about the causes, the course and the consequence of this episode; but much of it remains obscure. A prosopographical approach to the problem, however, might yield some results. Who, for example, were the leaders of the movement? What was their social and economic background, especially in its last and bloodiest phase after 1345, when it might seem to be at its most revolutionary? Two of them were members of the imperial family, Michael and Andrew Palaiologos; a third was Alexius Laskaris Metochites, one of the four sons of the wealthy Theodore Metochites. None of them could be said to be a penniless demagogue. If we knew how Michael and Andrew Palaiologos were related to the emperor's household we might be nearer to understanding what the Zealot revolution was about. But we do not, and so we have to surmise. Was there a black sheep branch of the Palaiologos family? Or a bar sinister? Papadopoulos suggested that Michael Palaiologos of Thessalonica was really Michael-Demetrios Koutroulis of Epiros, a son-in-law of Michael VIII.<sup>22</sup> If this were so he would have been about 82 years old when he became a revolutionary. The only social upstart among the Zealot leaders was George Kokalas; but even he married into the Palaiologos family. More prosopographical work here might produce some interesting results. A study of the Metochites family would in itself be fascinating and useful.

So far as the Palaiologan age is concerned the aspiring prosopographer is now understandably daunted by the emergence of the machine-made *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit* (PLP).



six fascicules of this monumental undertaking have now appeared, with a slim volume of addenda. There are four more to come. The material in them is processed and collated electronically by computer, which accounts for its provisional appearance. Eventually, in five to eight years time, the whole work, with its cumulative indexes, will be revised. All the corrections and additions will by then have been incorporated and it will be published in properly printed form. So far there are 15,236 entries, ranging from Aaron to Lochomalates. It is a remarkable work and a great tribute to the brains as well as the machines of the Austrian Academy, and not least to the organising talents and scholarship of Professor Trapp.

It is, as it calls itself, a Lexikon of the Palaiologan age, not simply a register of persons with Greek or Byzantine names found in the sources for that age. It thus lists such Latin family names as Visconti or Giustiniani, but only when they appear in texts transcribed in Greek, as 'Viskontis' or 'Ioustinianos'. In other words, it is confined to names recorded in hellenised form in Greek texts and sources. This seems to be one of its weaknesses or limitations. Under the heading of Asanes, for example, there are 65 entries. Many more members of the Asen, Asan or Asanes family are in fact known from this period; but they are excluded because their names occur only in latinised form in non-Greek documents. Similarly, there are many Angevin, Ragusan, Venetian and other non-Greek documents which contain large numbers of Greek names. But because they are in western or latinised form they are omitted from PLP. By contrast it does not seem very helpful to provide potted biographies of, for instance, Pope Benedict XII or Pope Innocent IV because they get one mention each in Greek sources as 'Benedittos' and 'Innokentios'. Marsilio da Carrara rates a whole column on the strength of one mention by Khalkokondyles.

This exclusion of all forms and variants of Byzantine family names in non-Greek documents is laudably consistent. But it means that the PLP has serious limitations for the genealogist, who will want to trace all the recorded members of a given Byzantine family whether their names are transcribed in Greek, Latin, Slavonic or other form. Even prosopographically it imposes its own limitations. The career of a man like Syrgiannes Palaiologos, for example, that Alcibiades of the fourteenth century, will only be incompletely told without reference to the Venetian documents in which he appears as 'dominus' or 'Ioannes Lepischerni', the pinkernis. None the less, the PLP has already proved its worth as an invaluable reference work, the product of a successful marriage between meticulous scholarship and the new technology.

In the field of Byzantine prosopography there remains a gap of some 600 years between the point where the Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire ends and the PLP begins. A scheme is now afoot to fill this gap with what can only be called a PBE or Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries. The hope is that it will be undertaken as a British Academy project, like the PLRE. The details have yet to be worked out. Inevitably it will be a collaborative effort, and inevitably it will go on for many years. But it is pleasant to think that the British Academy and British scholars will have taken the initiative in the production of one of the vital instrumenta of Byzantine studies.

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## CHAPTER 6 - THE BYZANTINE ARISTOCRATIC OIKOS

Paul Magdalino

Recent studies of aristocratic society in medieval western Europe have shown that it is important not to let the 'horizontal' stratification schemes, whether medieval or modern, which divide the aristocracy from its social inferiors, obscure our view of the 'vertical' connections which transcended the schematic divisions between orders and classes.<sup>1</sup> What made the aristocrat was not just his status in a hierarchy, but also his ability to identify with a group which he could call his own, and in which disparities between rich and poor, masters and servants, were offset by the solidarity of belonging to a single familia. As the emperor Romanos I put it, the 'powerful' (dynatoi) included not only those who could make threats or promises on their own authority, but also those who could invoke the power of others, "with whom they are intimate through familial ties".<sup>2</sup> Although Byzantium retained with remarkable continuity, the traditions and institutions of the unified, centralised late Roman state, it had much in common with other Mediterranean societies, where neither bureaucracies nor urban economies were able to destroy the inward-looking cohesion of family and household.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that from the very foundation of Constantinople, the oikos - the household with all its dependents and dependencies - was the basic building-block of all Byzantine urban and bureaucratic structures. Many of the neighbourhoods of the capital took their names from the great noble residences which formed their nuclei in the fourth and fifth centuries.<sup>4</sup> Fifth-century imperial legislation on urban building gives the impression that Constantinople grew as much by anarchical private enterprise as by public, governmental planning.<sup>5</sup> In the twelfth century, Odo of Deuil described Constantinople as a city where there were as many masters as there were rich men, and where the streets were gloomy, crime-ridden alleys overshadowed by the houses of the great.<sup>6</sup> A man's house is his castle, declared a commentator of the Synopsis Major of the Basilica,<sup>7</sup> and Kekaumenos, who regarded friendship as the chief threat to domestic privacy, would certainly have agreed.<sup>8</sup> The closed world of the oikos figures prominently in the imagery of Symeon the New Theologian. He compares the furtive thoughts of men's hearts to the adultery, pederasty, and treason which go on behind the closed doors of private houses.<sup>9</sup> Man's desire for heaven is compared to the longing with which a poor down-and-out sees the bejewelled hand of a beautiful princess reaching out from the seclusion of her chamber.<sup>10</sup> God's creation of the world is illustrated by the analogy of a king or rich official (archôn) laying out his domain:

Some land he puts under the plough, some he gives over to be planted with vines, some he leaves rough, and in one delightful and beautiful spot he establishes his dwelling;

there he founds palaces, constructs houses (oikoi), builds baths, plants parks and devises all kinds of delights. On the outside, he rings everything with a barrier, and makes locks and gates to open and close; not only that, but even though he fears no one, he sets guards so that his residence may be in every way most splendid and outstanding, and that it may be closed to his ungrateful and malevolent friends and to the insubordinate among his underlings and slaves, if such there should be. To his true and faithful friends, however, and to his grateful servants, access to and from him is uninhibited.<sup>11</sup>

As this passage shows, the importance of the oikos was not confined to the 'private sector'. The domains of the crown were administered as a group of theioi oikoi (domus divinae) in the sixth century, euageis oikoi by the eleventh.<sup>12</sup> When Basil I wanted to create a special administrative unit to finance imperial receptions out of the revenue from crown lands, he created the Neos Oikos and the oikos of the Mangana, to which Constantine IX added the oikos of St. George the Tropaiphoros - a palace for his mistress, a monastery, a charitable institution, and a law school all in one.<sup>13</sup> The Great Palace of the emperors was a cluster of oikoi, each with its own staff, and insofar as all public administration was centred there, the empire itself took on the character of one enormous oikos. Byzantines always maintained a distinction between the public and the private aspects of imperial power, and this distinction deserves to be taken seriously.<sup>14</sup> However, the formal division between the palace and the civil administration became less and less clear-cut with time, and in practice Byzantium conformed to the pattern of all court societies, in which functions of state tend to become confused with functions of the monarch's household.<sup>15</sup> Promotion in the bureaucracy and the armed forces was effectively a matter of movement from one familia to another, with the imperial retinue at the head of the scale.<sup>16</sup> The ideal of liberty was certainly not unknown in Byzantium,<sup>17</sup> but service to the monarch was also regarded as a highly desirable and prestigious activity. Once again, the point is eloquently made by Symeon the New Theologian:

Who, would we say, are those who truly serve the earthly basileus? Those who spend their time in their own houses, or those who follow him everywhere? Those who reside on their estates, or those who are enrolled in the army? Those who fall to enjoying themselves at home in a life of dissipation, or those who perform heroic feats, receive wounds and inflict them on the enemy in turn, rescuing their fellow slaves and putting the enemy to shame? The goldsmiths and coppersmiths and masons who are always working and (yet) barely manage to provide for their own and their families' bodily needs, or the generals and chiliarchs and other officers and the retinues (laoi) commanded by them? Is it not obvious that it is the latter rather than the former who serve the earthly basileus? For the coppersmith and the goldsmith and the builder, if they do a piece of work for the emperor, receive the agreed wage from his underlings and return home like strangers and outsiders, neither seeing the emperor, not having any acquaintance of friendship with him. But the generals and

officers are all acquaintances, even friends, of the emperor, and so, through them, are the retinues subordinate to each.<sup>18</sup>

By the Palaeologan period, the right to call oneself the emperor's *doulos* and be described as his *oikeios* was one of the most exclusive hallmarks of aristocratic status.<sup>19</sup> The confusion of 'household' and 'state' at lower levels is apparent in the tendency of imperial officials to conduct public business in their own homes, or to make themselves at home in the imperial *oikoi* of which they were in charge. One recension of the *Life of Saint Basil the Younger* relates that when Basil was brought to Constantinople on suspicion of being a Saracen spy, the *parakoimōmenos* Samonas interrogated him in the Neos Oikos, but the other version has Samonas bring the saint to his own house for questioning.<sup>20</sup> There is probably truth in both versions.<sup>21</sup> According to Constantine Manasses, Manuel I's logothete of the drome Michael Hagiotheodorites was besieged in his house by an innumerable swarm of petitioners from the moment the gates opened at dawn.<sup>22</sup> Niketas Choniates records that when, in 1181, the Constantinopolitan mob sacked the house of Theodore Pantechnes, *epi tôn oikeiakôn, dikaiodotês*, and eparch, it was able to loot fiscal records (*demosioi tomoi*) as well as his own private possessions.<sup>23</sup>

The *oikos* was also the basic unit of ecclesiastical administration. Episcopal and monastic establishments resembled those of lay magnates not only in that the bishop's household and the cenobitic monastery formed the hub of a large complex of diverse and scattered sources of landed wealth, but also in that architecturally and functionally they had much in common. For notaries, it made no difference whether their employer was "an aristocratic (*archontikos*) or pious (*euagês*) *oikos* or a monastery or an old age home".<sup>24</sup> As Symeon the New Theologian remarked, what distinguished the worldly from the unworldly was "not houses, not baths, not villages or vineyards and estates, for *lavrai* and monasteries consist of such things".<sup>25</sup> "La liaison entre fortune privée, fondation pieuse et quartier urbain" was one of the dominant characteristics of the early Byzantine city,<sup>26</sup> and it was no less dominant in later periods. Many, if not most, urban and suburban churches and monasteries were converted lay *oikoi*,<sup>27</sup> and it was common for such foundations to inherit a sizeable bloc of the economic dependencies which had been attached to the lay establishment. Conversion might also occasionally take the opposite course, despite the taint of sacrilege thereby incurred: a famous case is that of the Despot Constantine Doukas, who in ca.1218 turned the Metropolitan of Naupaktos out of his episcopal palace and took up residence there, making certain 'improvements' for his convenience.<sup>28</sup>

The households of the 'powerful' in Byzantium are therefore a subject which deserves to be studied in depth. Unfortunately, the source-material is extremely meagre by western European standards. There are no surviving household accounts, few wills, and few detailed descriptions of non-imperial secular houses. Hardly any buildings remain above ground, and excavation has not done very much to complete the picture for the Middle Byzantine period. Much of the available evidence is indirect, impressionistic, and laconic, and for this very reason needs sensitive scrutiny in greater depth and at greater length than can be attempted here. However, a volume on the Byzantine aristocracy is a useful context in which to suggest some

lines of approach that will need to be followed and to anticipate some of the conclusions which a proper study is likely to reach.<sup>29</sup>

Byzantine palaces form the subject of another contribution to this volume, and it is not my intention to go into questions of architecture and decoration. However, the Byzantine *oikos* cannot be discussed as a social phenomenon without some reference to its physical appearance. A fine house was clearly a basic symbol of aristocratic status, and there is some evidence of official concern that men should live in houses appropriate to their rank. When Basil II decided to make an example of the Philokales who had become a *prō-tovestiarios* and used his position to buy up his native village, thereby transforming it into his private estate (*proasteion*) and himself into one of the powerful (*dynatoi*), the emperor not only dispossessed this social climber of his illegal purchases, but also destroyed the fine house he had built.<sup>30</sup> When Psellos became secretary to Constantine IX and needed a residence commensurate with his new position, the emperor arranged for him to move into the house of Constantine Doukas, who was given another.<sup>31</sup> Among the features which gave the Comnenian nobility distinct and unprecedented status as 'princes of the blood' was the magnificence of the residences which they built for themselves, "resembling cities in magnitude and not at all unlike imperial palaces in splendour".<sup>32</sup>

What distinguished the aristocratic residence from that of the ordinary citizen? The case of Philokales, to which we have just alluded, provides a clue. Given that this man consolidated his transition from 'poor' to 'powerful' status by converting his village into his private estate, it is reasonable to suppose that the 'fine house' at its simplest corresponded to the domanial residence - the 'manor house' - which formed the nucleus of every *oikoproasteion*. One such house is described in the inventory of the domain at Baris near the mouth of the Meander, given to Andronikos Doukas in 1073: it consisted of a domed church, a domed cruciform hall (*triklinos*), with four chambers (*kouboukleia*) opening off it, and a bath-house (*loutron*).<sup>33</sup> From one point of view, this was a very modest residence, even by provincial standards. While it no doubt provided the basic amenities required by a landlord visiting his estate in the summer,<sup>34</sup> or residing there permanently for want of anything better to do,<sup>35</sup> it could hardly compare with Constantine Doukas's country house at Pentegostis near Serres, which had "quarters adequate for receiving the emperor" (Alexius I), accompanied, presumably, by his travelling household.<sup>36</sup> From another point of view, however, the combination of chapel, hall, chambers, terrace, and bath-house put the ensemble at Baris in the same class as the imperial palace, and in a different class from the ordinary *oikēmata* described in wills and deeds of transfer.<sup>37</sup> The so-called 'House of Botaneiates', a dilapidated private palace in Constantinople which was granted to the Genoese by Isaac II consisted of the same elements.<sup>38</sup> There might be other functional buildings, such as storehouses (*hōreiōnes*),<sup>39</sup> a 'wardrobe' (*vestiarion*),<sup>40</sup> separate apartments (*koitōnes*) for members of the family and guests,<sup>41</sup> an outdoor dais (*souphas*)<sup>42</sup> or a 'little building' (*oikiskos*) to house a study-cum-library.<sup>43</sup> Essentially, however, the difference between the smallest 'manor-house' and the largest urban palace was one of degree, not of kind. Byzantines inevitably praised - or, when preaching, criticised - a 'fine house' for its size and its ornamental extras: its porticoes, pavilions,

fountains, and gardens; its shimmering expanses of gold mosaic and multicoloured marble.<sup>44</sup> Thus Nicephorus Chrysoberges compared the Patriarch John Kamateros to a palace, "wrought to a high degree of luxury, not small and unarticulated like ordinary houses, in which entrance and chamber are intermingled, and which are neither thrown open by outer gates, nor heralded by decorative outbuildings and circuits".<sup>45</sup>

The layout of the more ambitious non-imperial lay residence is illustrated by two literary descriptions - that of Digenes' imaginary palace by the Euphrates, and that by Theodore Metochites of his palace in Constantinople which was destroyed after his fall from power in 1328.<sup>46</sup> Both accounts describe a complex of buildings grouped around a central courtyard with a church in the middle. Lucy-Anne Hunt draws attention to imperial and Islamic antecedents of this plan. It is also worth noting, in view of what was said earlier about the affinities between lay and monastic *oikoi*, that the same basic arrangement is to be found in extant Byzantine and post-Byzantine monasteries, such as those of Mt. Athos.<sup>47</sup> The elevated living quarters of Athonite monasteries are reminiscent, too, of Byzantine literary allusions to the status value of multi-storey houses.<sup>48</sup> The Athonite monastic complex may perhaps be seen as the survival of a typical Byzantine patrician domestic model, with two qualifications. Firstly, it is unlikely that the Constantinopolitan ensemble formed such a compact, enclosed, unbroken compound. The rural monasteries of Greece were designed and adapted according to defence requirements which did not exist in the city and which, in any case, were traditionally the government's concern; even in the mid-fourteenth century, when John V was only too glad to enlist private enterprise in the maintenance of provincial defences, both monasteries and secular landowners went through the formality of seeking imperial permission before building towers for their protection.<sup>49</sup> The imperial palaces themselves were not fortified until quite late in their development.<sup>50</sup> That development had been one of comfortable, irregular, horizontal growth;<sup>51</sup> given that building space was no problem in most parts of Constantinople,<sup>52</sup> the emperors were probably not alone in their tendency to sprawl. The shape, and appearance, of urban palaces must also have been influenced by the need to adapt or incorporate much older structures.<sup>53</sup> Secondly, the specialised nature of the monastic community created different domestic priorities from those of the secular household. Theoretically, at least, it was more austere, more homogeneous, more communal, and more egalitarian, giving greater prominence to the church than to the *triklinos*, and being less dependent on servants. Above all, the monastery was not divisible into smaller domestic units, whereas the *raison d'être* of the secular *oikos* was to generate new *oikoi* for its sons and daughters.

The question of the layout of the Byzantine aristocratic *oikos* here becomes inseparable from that of its structure as a social organism. In a sense, this organism was very simple, and consisted of the master of the house, his wife and children, and the servants who catered to their domestic needs. Yet in another sense, this simple household was only the nucleus of a much greater household unit. One such unit is recorded by Skylitzes in his account of the coup attempted by the *proedros* Theodosius, a cousin of Constantine IX, at the accession of Michael VI in 1056: from his house near the

Leomakellion, Theodosius marched on the Great Palace at the head of a following consisting of "his relatives and slaves and those who served him in other ways, many of his neighbours and some of his associates".<sup>54</sup> The diverse elements in this group together constituted an extended or multiple household by virtue of the ties which linked them to Theodosius and his home: the ties of kinship, which cemented the 'house' of the family clan; the ties of service which united the *oikeioi* (familiares) of the lord's retinue (*hetaireia*) with his *familia* of domestic servants;<sup>55</sup> and the ties of familiarity which allowed close neighbours and friends to enter the house unhindered by watchful doorkeepers. The household did not, of course, embrace the clan, the retinue, the neighbourhood or the coterie, but it was the one institution which brought these groups together, and it overlapped with each of them to an extent which cannot be neatly defined. Within the kin group, one notices a tendency for adult children to remain within the confines of the parental home, sometimes maintaining their own establishments. Theodore Metochites mentions that of the various 'houses' within his vast palace, some were his, while others belonged to his sons.<sup>56</sup> Hagio-graphical sources of earlier periods refer to similar arrangements. In the *Life of Andreas Salos*, the saint's friend Epiphanius is shown living in his parents' house and dining with them when they had company, while at the same time having a self-contained apartment (*koiton*) with his own servant staff and facilities for cooking himself simple meals while he was fasting.<sup>57</sup> The children and grandchildren of St. Philaretos the Younger all lived with him in his large house.<sup>58</sup> St. Basil the Younger performed one of his miracles in a house occupied by the Gongylios brothers, both *praepositi* and important figures at court.<sup>59</sup> When Abraamios, the future Athanasios of the Great Lavra, came to Constantinople from Trebizond, he stayed with his married sister at the home of her father-in-law, the *strategos* Zephinezer.<sup>60</sup> Within the 'service' category one can, of course, distinguish between real and notional servants - between *menials* and "those who served in other ways" - but the distinction between *Dienerchaft* and *Gefolgschaft* is not as simple as it sounds. Twelfth-century intellectuals who served on the staffs of Comnenian magnates evidently felt their status to be ambiguous: according to Michael Choniates, such service was commonly considered an honour and a certain road to fame and fortune, but others describe it as degrading servitude.<sup>61</sup> There is no doubt an element of literary *topos* in their complaints, and Prodromos implies that *litterati* could afford to pick and choose their 'lords'.<sup>62</sup> It is possible, however, that a new, critical attitude to *douleia* was developing at the time, and that the differences between masters and servants were more sharply accentuated in Byzantium than in some other medieval societies; we know, for example, that while in the west attendants sat with their lords on formal occasions, in Byzantium they stood.<sup>63</sup> Another problem is that of the extent to which the magnate household had artists and craftsmen in its own exclusive employment. We know that the imperial palace had its own workshops, and that large monasteries could be self-sufficient in a variety of technical services.<sup>64</sup> Yet, as we have seen, Symeon the New Theologian assumed that craftsmen were normally hired, even for work in the imperial palace, on a temporary basis,<sup>65</sup> and there is much specific evidence to confirm his assumption. As regards the coterie of friends, neighbours and hangers-on, there are no fixed criteria for deciding who was or was not thoroughly 'at home' in the aristocratic household. Holy men



were almost by definition external to the secular oikos, yet the abbot of a monastery dependent upon an aristocratic ktêtôr might have a place in the extended household, and Basil the Younger actually moved into a koitôn in the house of one Constantine, primmikêrios tôn ethnikôn.<sup>66</sup> As for the parasitic intellectuals who, in the image of one twelfth-century writer, flocked like twittering birds to the great houses of Constantinople,<sup>67</sup> the evidence rarely allows us to assess their exact degree of familiarity with their 'patrons' - when Constantine Manasses 'frequented' the house of a Palaiologos who "enjoyed learning and befriended men of letters", was it as notional servant, friend, or occasional guest?<sup>68</sup> In general, we can only conclude that the effective limits of the aristocratic oikos as a social group lay somewhere between those of the simple household narrowly defined and those of the extended household generously interpreted.

Passing references to aristocratic households are extremely common in Byzantine literary sources, and, as should by now be apparent, much can be learned by piecing these references together. Much can also be inferred from treatises on protocol at the imperial court. Yet the most direct and detailed sources of information are the surviving wills and monastic typika drawn up by wealthy Byzantines, and it would be wrong to conclude this discussion without presenting some of the evidence which these documents provide.

The earliest and most famous surviving will from the middle Byzantine period is that of the prôtospatharios Boilas (c.1059).<sup>69</sup> This source has been thoroughly studied by Vryonis and Lemerle, and here we need give only the briefest summary of its contents. Boilas was a Cappadocian who had spent most of his life on the eastern frontier in the service of a certain doux Michael and his son the magistros Basil. Although hardly a 'magnate', he had possessed a respectable landed fortune of nine domains (chôria and proasteia) and one other piece of land (ktêma). He had already parted with four of these properties: two had been given to a pair of brothers and their cousin, all described as "orphans and destitute" and all apparently unrelated to Boilas; the other two had been appropriated by his masters. Boilas divided the bulk of what was still left between his two daughters and their husbands. He foresaw that both couples would continue to live in his house, which stood opposite the church which he had founded. As Lemerle points out, this church was his real heir. He provided it with an expensive and impressive collection of books and liturgical objects. He held his descendants responsible for maintaining it and the priests attached to it, and instructed that they should forfeit one of their properties to it if they neglected their responsibility. As striking as Boilas' concern for his church is the care with which he provided for his former slaves and their families (those, that is, who had not already been assigned to his daughters' service). All were freed and given small legacies, but all remained, in a sense, members of Boilas' household. Their free status was conditional upon their adherence to the orthodox faith, and they were to earn their living in the service of Boilas' heirs, either as clerics attached to the church, or as dependents of his offspring. One of them, it is interesting to note, was a trained calligrapher.

Slaves and servants also figure prominently in the wills (1090

and 1094) of the kouropalatês Symbatios Pakourianos and his wife Kalê, of the Basilakes family.<sup>70</sup> This couple, who died childless, ranked higher than Boilas, and although they possessed fewer estates, they left a much larger fortune in money and valuables. Symbatios, who predeceased his wife, made her and his brother Sergios his executors and main heirs. In addition to silver plate worth 50lb gold, the amount of her dowry, and other valuables to the value of the sum which Symbatios owed her according to the terms of their marriage agreement, Kalê received two of his proasteia (one of which had been granted by the emperor), while Sergios received the third proasteion and a quantity of livestock. Symbatios instructed that his slaves were to be freed after his death, keeping all the movables in their possession. 12lb of gold and 3000lb of grain were to be distributed to the poor, and another 6lb of gold were to be paid to the freemen in his service, two of whom also received gifts of valuable garments. The main beneficiaries of Kalê's will were the monastery of Iviron, where her husband had arranged to be buried, certain of her kinsmen, and certain monks, but she also made individual bequests (legata) to 29 people in her service: 10 free servants (anthrôpoi), including two eunuchs and one priest, and 19 freed slaves (apodouloi, apeleutheroi), of whom 12 were women. Each received a sum of money (between 1/3lb and 2lb of trachea nomismata, totalling 21lb) and at least one other movable asset - draught animals for the men and clothing for the women. In addition, she stipulated that each was to retain the movables in his or her possession, and to continue to receive, for a year after her death, the customary annona of corn and wine, plus two pigs and two animals for slaughter (sphakta).

No comparable documents survive from the twelfth century, but the monastic archives of Mount Athos contain a number of wills and deeds which throw some light on the oikoi of the propertied class in Macedonia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The most informative are the wills of Theodore Karavas (1314)<sup>71</sup> and Theodore Sarantenos (1327).<sup>72</sup>

Theodore Karavas held no civil or ecclesiastical office, and his name ('shipper') suggests that his family had made its way in trade, but he must have been one of the more affluent commoners in Thessalonica. At the time he made his will, his estate consisted of the following:

1. four blocs of urban property in the neighbourhood (geitônia) of S. Menas:
  - (a) Six houses (oikêmata) sharing a courtyard with property belonging to his nephew, John Attaleiotes
  - (b) To the east of these, three houses bought from one Monenos - one large house divided into three, and two others - with their own courtyard
  - (c) Two houses to the west of bloc (a), sharing a courtyard with property belonging to another nephew, Demetrios Malakes, and to Theodore's gambros Leo, the husband of his 'spiritual daughter' (goddaughter)

- (d) A house sharing a courtyard with property belonging to the Peribleptos monastery

In passing, we may note both the concentration of so much property in one neighbourhood, and the fact that at least three of Theodore's neighbours were more or less related to him. Unfortunately, it is not clear whether this was the result of intermarriage between neighbours, or of the division of a single oikos through inheritance.

2. Eight vineyards near the city, covering a total area of 61 modioi.
3. Various other rural assets, including stores of wine and grain, sown corn, livestock, and two village houses
4. Household utensils, personal valuables, and 52 ducats
5. Some small credits and debts totalling 17 hyperpyra and 84 ducats.

Theodore states that he had no outstanding obligations connected with the dowry of his first wife, since he had already made this over to their son and daughter, along with various other assets from his own fortune which were specified in their marriage contracts; the son, John, had received yet further gifts. Theodore had disposed of the houses and vineyards brought to him in dowry by his second wife Anna, so if he died before her, she was to inherit the houses in bloc 1(b) plus a vineyard of 13 modioi, half of which was equivalent to the one in her dowry; the other half was to pay for memorial services. Anna received a further bequest of a vineyard of 9 modioi, and John was left one of the houses in bloc 1(c). Theodore also made small cash legacies to his 2 grandchildren (10 and 5 hyperpyra), to all his nephews (1 hyperpyron each), and to 7 priests (a total of 11 hyperpyra), one of whom, Montonis, held the church in which Theodore wanted to be buried (for which reason he received an additional 4 hyperpyra). Otherwise, the principal beneficiaries were the Peribleptos monastery, which received house 1(d), and Theodore's remarkable spiritual progeny of 3 godsons, 1 goddaughter, and the daughter of another goddaughter, who between them received 2 houses, parcels of vineyard totalling 11 modii, and 13 hyperpyra. All remaining assets (which evidently included five houses in bloc 1(a) and 14 modii of vineyard) were to be used for paying off the debts, for funeral expenses, for satisfying any further claims which his wife may have had in respect of her dowry, and for charitable distribution.

The other late Byzantine will which we are considering here, that of the skouterios Theodore Sarantenos, is part of an extensive dossier of fourteenth-century documents concerning the Prodomos monastery which Theodore founded in Berroia and eventually donated to the Athonite house of Vatopedi. Thanks to the relative wealth of documentation, and to the work of Theokharides and Zakhariadou, we are fairly well informed about the testator, his fortune, and his family.<sup>73</sup> Through his wife, if not on his own account, Theodore belonged to the highest echelons of the local nobility, and although he appears to have inherited little real estate from his parents he

was, in 1327, a wealthy man by late Byzantine standards. His wife brought him a double zeugêlateion of arable land just below Berroia, to which he obtained full proprietary rights after her death. He inherited 40 modioi of another zeugêlateion from his "late brother", and purchased adjoining properties to the value of 258 hyperpyra. Another zeugêlateion came to him by imperial grant. Within the walls of Berroia, he purchased two aulai (courtyards with houses, gardens, and other appurtenances); in addition to these, he possessed another aulê, in which he lived and in which the monastery was built. It is not clear where Theodore found the money for these purchases or for the considerable improvements and developments which he made to some of the properties concerned: he may have acquired some by inheritance or good management, and his period of service in the palace at Constantinople was undoubtedly remunerative.

The purpose of the will was to settle almost the whole of Theodore's estate upon his monastery of the Prodomos, with some of the property constituting an immediate endowment, and other parts of it being retained "under the administration of myself and my anthrôpoi and the rest of my retinue (laos) until my death". As he was careful to point out, the monastery was not just his personal creation, but had also involved his late wife Eudokia and brother John. John had apparently intended to leave all he possessed to the projected foundation, and had in his will made Theodore trustee to this end; however, after his death in battle, his brothers-in-law had seized his property, including the aulê in which the monastery was to be built, and the resulting lawsuit granted Theodore only one third of the total.<sup>74</sup> Theodore's wife Eudokia had supervised the building of the monastery church during his absence in Constantinople, and it was no doubt with her consent that he proposed to endow it with her dowry land. He stipulated that he and John were to be commemorated jointly as ktêtôres, and he entrusted the foundation to the care of another brother, Gerasimos, an Athonite monk, who was to become not only its abbot but also its lord (exousiastês and despotês), with Theodore's nephews to help him as lay guardians (epitropoi). In the event, these arrangements did not materialise: within two years Theodore died, leaving the monastery to Vatopedi.

Theodore's total commitment to his monastery seems somewhat surprising in view of the fact that he had three grandchildren, sons of the beloved daughter whose death had caused him and his wife to consider founding a church in the first place. He evidently considered that he owed them no more than he had already provided in his daughter's dowry, a piece of land of 600 modioi, worth 300 hyperpyra, detached from his wife's dowry property. He did leave some houses to one grandson, Theodore, whom he had 'adopted' as his son, but otherwise his bequests to them, as to his nephews, were token gifts of horses, valuables, and cash. Although Theodore, like Boilas and the Pakourianoï, made provision for his servants, the clauses concerning them occupy much less space in his will. Twelve of his anthrôpoi were to receive small bequests of draught animals, clothes and sums of money not exceeding 8 hyperpyra. Beyond that, he stipulated that his anthrôpoi and anatrophai (servant girls or foster daughters?) "must remain with my brother in the monastery's service and not leave it, as many as are capable", and that his brother was to "govern my paidopoula and the women in my house at his discretion".<sup>75</sup>

These five wills do not necessarily constitute a representative sample of evidence, and it is easy to read too much into comparisons between them. It may be purely accidental that the one testator without a 'senatorial' title is also the one who fails to mention servants of any kind, and yet, on the other hand, does make generous provisions for a number of godchildren. Although it is probably no coincidence that Boilas and the Pakourianoï speak of slaves and freed slaves whereas Theodore Sarantenos speaks only of servants who were legally free, it may or may not be significant that the fourteenth-century master refers to his servants less affectionately and treats them less generously. In any case, wills have obvious limitations as sources, since they show the household in transition rather than in operation. Within these limits, however, the evidence we have considered is instructive, because it suggests that the secular *oikos* was by nature a transitory structure, which was bound to break up after the death of its owner, even if he left a male heir, unless it was incorporated as a pious foundation. The fundamental contrast in the examples we have looked at is between the *oikoi* of the Pakourianoï and Karavas on the one hand, which failed to survive their owners, and, on the other hand, those of Boilas and Sarantenos, in which a church or monastery took over as head of the household.

It should by now be apparent why the *typika* of aristocratic monastic foundations are of interest to us here, despite the fact that the way of life which they prescribe was the deliberate antithesis of that lived in the fine houses of the rich and powerful.<sup>76</sup> We have already seen that the monastery was in more ways than one the *alter ego* of the secular *oikos*. Far from being a negation of the extended household, or merely one of its extensions, the religious foundation was the household's ultimate fulfilment, and the best possible insurance against the various forces - social, political, legal, and fiscal - which threatened the integrity of the family and its fortune. As Lemerle has shown, the foundation and endowment of a family monastery was a sound economic investment, capable of bringing material as well as spiritual benefits to the founder and those of his descendants who inherited his proprietary rights to the establishment. Michael Attaleiates in his *Diataxis* laid down that his heirs were entitled to two-thirds of all surplus cash revenue, as well as all surplus rents in kind, from the estates of his joint foundation at Constantinople and Raideustos.<sup>77</sup> Two empresses who founded nunneries, Eirene Doukaina and Theodore Palaiologina, made provision for female relatives to be able to enter on easy terms if they could not face the full rigours of communal living,<sup>78</sup> and Eirene, in a long appendix to her *typikon*, instructed that the luxury apartments which she had built next to her convent were to be for the permanent use of her daughter Anna and Anna's female descendants.<sup>79</sup> The complexity of the instructions is revealing. Although each descendant was at liberty to bequeath the houses, the legatee had to be a descendant of hers, and if the line of descent failed, the buildings were to revert to the convent. Neither the occupant nor the convent had the right to sell, mortgage, or otherwise alienate the property. Eirene clearly felt that by tying the houses to the convent, and by bequeathing them through the *typikon*, she was keeping them in the family more effectively than she could have done by leaving them to her daughter outright.

Besides serving as a kind of family trust, the family monastery

also acted as a symbol and focus of family unity and continuity, in ways which are well illustrated by the *Typikon* of the convent of our Lady of Good Hope in Constantinople, composed c.1330 by Theodora or Theodoule Palaiologina.<sup>80</sup> The *Typikon* opens with a group of portraits depicting the foundress, her parents, her husband, her sons and their wives, followed by their daughters and sons-in-law. It makes provision for memorial services to be held for all these people and other kinsmen: the foundress's brothers, sisters, and nephews, as well the husband of her sister Maria and the father-in-law of her son Theodore. Nearly all those commemorated had donated land, money, or precious objects to the convent. Theodora appointed her daughter Euphrosyne to succeed her as *ktêtorissa*, and entrusted the lay protection of the convent to her sons Theodore and John. Theodore, at least, seems to have felt strongly attached to the foundation: he donated a number of vineyards and, with his wife, financed the building of the nuns' cells. It is also interesting that the convent's main gate stood opposite the 'large houses' of Theodore and John. Theodora's sons may have acquired these properties after the convent's foundation, but it is perhaps more likely that they and the land on which the convent stood had previously formed a single ensemble - the original family *oikos*. The convent was such an intimate family affair that it is highly surprising that the *Typikon* makes no mention of burials in the church, at a time when many aristocratic *ktêtores* were providing their churches with large extensions to accommodate family tombs.<sup>81</sup>

Although the aristocratic monastery was primarily a monument to the kin group, other members of the extended household might be included. In the appendix to Theodora's *Typikon*, her daughter Euphrosyne arranged for memorial services to be said for a number of unrelated benefactors who were probably close family friends.<sup>82</sup> If the unidentified tomb in the Kariye Camii does, as has been suggested, belong to the Despot Demetrios Palaiologos, this would seem to be one indication that the family church served to unite the founder with friends as well as relatives, in death as in life.<sup>83</sup> While the *typika* of nunneries make no mention of servants and retainers, male founders seem to have been more anxious to include such dependents. Gregory Pakourianos frequently refers to his *anthrôpoi*.<sup>84</sup> John II arranged for the Pantokrator monastery to commemorate a number of officials not related to him; at least one of these, his *vestiaritês* Theodore Beroites, had been bound to him by ties of personal service.<sup>85</sup> Senior members of his wife's household had been closely involved in the building of the monastery.<sup>86</sup> Servants are even more in evidence in the *Typikon* which John's brother, the *sebastokratôr* Isaac Komnenos, composed in 1152 for his monastery, dedicated to the Virgin Kosmosoteira, at the mouth of the Maritsa (Hebros) in Thrace.<sup>87</sup> Isaac writes with particular gratitude and affection of two loyal henchmen: Leo Kastamonites, who had been his *anthrôpos* and companion since youth, and his secretary Michael, who had overseen the building of the monastery, suggesting many useful modifications, and had also built, at his own expense, lodgings within the monastery precinct which were to remain his until the day he died. After their death, both men were to be commemorated in the monastery's diptychs, and to be honoured with fine tombs in the exonarthex of the church, where burial was otherwise reserved to the founder himself, his *prôtovestiarios* Constantine (a priest), and his foster-child Konstitzes, the nephew of his *vestiaritês* Romanites.

Since no lay guardian was appointed, Leo and Michael were to assist the abbot in supervising the monastery's affairs, and they were to act in loco parentis to Konstitzes, ensuring that he did not squander the legacy of money and precious cloth which Isaac had left him and which was being kept in the monastery until he was eighteen.

The Typikon also provides interesting details about the economic status of Isaac's servants in relation to their master and his monastery. The more important members of his household lived off the proceeds of properties which he had given them, under varying conditions. His seneschal (pinkernês) Constantine and his vestiaritês Niketas Romanites held villages which were to become part of the monastery's estate after their deaths. The monastery was also to inherit one village held by Konstitzes if he should die without children. On the other hand, the immovables given to Leo Kastamonites and Michael the grammatikos were theirs to dispose of as they wished. Isaac was most insistent that Leo, Michael, and Konstitzes be treated as belonging to the monastery, and he urged the abbot to see that their property was protected. His overall concern was clearly for the monastery to inherit and perpetuate the household ties which had contributed to its foundation. The same concern can be seen in his instructions about the future of the vestiaritai whom he had recruited from the domain of Neokastron to assist in the building of the monastery and in other ways. After Isaac's death they were to be resettled close to the fortified precinct of the monastery, where they were to guard it against marauders and to make themselves available for running errands for the abbot. Since it is stipulated that they were to be 'free of imposition' (anepêreastoi) on the part of the abbot, and no mention is made of wages or allowances, one assumes that they, too, held plots of land. These cannot, however, have been very profitable, since it was foreseen that the abbot would provide horses and travelling expenses for such errands as he required. Tenure was conditional upon exclusive service to the monastery: if the vestiaritai wanted to serve another master, they would have to leave Neokastron altogether.

Isaac's preoccupation with his servants is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that he never mentions his wife, children, brothers and sisters, his parents being his only kinsmen named for commemoration in the monastery's prayers. These peculiarities are partly explained by the fact that the Kosmosoteira was the work of Isaac's old age. He had already been involved in the foundation of a family monastery in Constantinople, the Chora, where he had originally intended to be buried, and where his family were no doubt commemorated.<sup>88</sup> When Isaac claims that he had dedicated "almost all my movable and immovable property" to the Mother of God, he surely means by this the property which was his paternal inheritance. The Kosmosoteira and its endowments, together with Isaac's gifts to his servants, must have represented the extent of his oikos after he had discharged his obligations to his son Andronikos, who would have been entitled to that part of the estate corresponding to his mother's dowry.<sup>89</sup> Isaac may well have dealt with these matters in his 'secret will' (mystikê diathêkê). In any case, given Isaac's record of disloyalty to both John II and Manuel I, it is highly likely that his retirement to his Thracian domains was not entirely voluntary, and that his devotion to his familia of loyal servants was in part compensation for the absence of his own flesh and blood.<sup>90</sup> However,

there can be no doubt that his paternalism was genuine: the Typikon abounds in endearing personal touches, and Isaac comes across, on paper at least, as a much more sympathetic character than Theodore Sarantenos, who also, it will be recalled, bound his servants to his monastery.

It is hoped that the above pages will have left at least an impression of the significance of the oikos as a social model in Byzantine aristocratic society. What they have not done, and what only a much lengthier study can attempt, is to demonstrate how, if at all, this model changed throughout the 'Byzantine Millennium', and differed from other contemporary models, both Latin and Islamic. The problem may perhaps best be formulated in terms of three interrelated questions. Firstly, did the oikos ever face serious competition from alternative forms of social and political organisation, such as the guild, the monastic community, the village commune, the city, and the state? Secondly, how did the relationship between the imperial court and 'private' oikoi evolve in the course of Byzantine history? How consistently was the former imitated by the latter, whether intentionally or unintentionally, and to what extent was the influence the other way? Did changes such as the abandonment of the Holy Apostles as an imperial mausoleum, the restructuring of the court hierarchy under the Comneni, and the rise of the Blachernai palace as the main imperial residence signify a progressive invasion of public by private, aristocratic practice? This brings us to our third and final question: did the internal structure of the oikos remain constant throughout the period, or did kinship ties progressively appreciate at the expense of service ties, and what significance can be attached to the diminishing importance of legal slavery? We may think we know the answers to these questions, but they are still open, and only by confronting them as a whole will we make sense of them.

# NOTES

1. Jacques Heers, Family Clans in the Middle Ages, tr. B. Herbert (Amsterdam/New York/Oxford, 1977); on orders see G. Duby, The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined, tr. A. Goldhammer (Chicago, 1980).
2. Zepos, Ius, I, 203.
3. See, for example, F.W. Kent, Household and Lineage in Renaissance Florence (Princeton, 1977).
4. G. Dagron, 'Le Christianisme dans la ville byzantine', DOP, 31 (1977), 8-10.
5. G. Dagron, Naissance d'une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451 (Paris, 1974), 528-30.
6. De profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem, ed. & tr. V.G. Berry (New York, 1948), 64-5.
7. Synopsis Major Basilicorum, K.II.45, scholion p (Zepos, Ius, V, 323).
8. Kekaumenos, ed. Wassiliewsky-Jernstedt, 42-3; ed. G.G. Litavrin, 202.
9. Catachèses, ed. B. Krivochéine, III, p.140.
10. Traité théologiques et éthiques, ed. Krivochéine, II, p.70.
11. Ibid., I, p. 180.
12. A.H.M. Jones, The Later Roman Empire (Oxford, 1964), 425-6 & n.39; N. Oikonomides, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XIe siècle', TM, 6 (1976), 139-41.
13. P. Lemerle, (Cinq études sur le XIe siècle byzantin (Paris, 1977), 237ff; N. Oikonomides, 'St. George of Mangana, Maria Skleraina, and the "Malyj Sion" of Novgorod', DOP, 34-5 (1980-1), 239-46.
14. See my remarks in 'Aspects of Twelfth-Century', Byzantine Kaiserkritik, Speculum 58 (1983), 338ff.
15. N. Elias, Die höfische Gesellschaft (4th edition Darmstadt, 1979).
16. H-G. Beck, 'Byzantinisches Gefolgschaftswesen', Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte (1966), (1-32 reprinted in idem, Ideen und Realitäten in Byzanz (London, 1972)). Cf. also the early career of Alexius Apokaukos as described by John Cantacuzenus (Bonn), II, 89.

17. Magdalino, 'Kaiserkritik' (see n.13), 339-40.
18. Traité théologiques et éthiques, II, 166.
19. J. Verpeaux, 'Les oikētoi', REB, 23 (1965), 87-99.
20. Vita Sancti Basilii iunioris, ed. S.G. Vilinsky, Zapiski imperatorskogo novorossijskago universiteta, istoriko-filologicheskago fakulteta, 6 (Odessa, 1911), 6; Acta Sanctorum, Mart., III, 20; see Lemerle, Cinq Études, 273, n. 53. Cf. Chr. G. Angelidi, The Life of Hosios Basileios the Younger (Ioannina, 1980) (in Greek).
21. If the discrepancy is not simply due to a copyist's error, it would seem to indicate that Samonas occupied the Neos as its oikonomos. On the position of the oikonomos of an euagēs oikos, see Oikonomides, loc. cit. (above, notes 12-13).
22. Ed. K. Horna, Wiener Studien, 28 (1906), 182-3.
23. Niketas Choniates, 235.
24. Book of the Eparch, I, 20 (ed. J. Nicole, p.20).
25. Catachèses, I, p.440.
26. Dagron, 'Le Christianisme dans la ville byzantine', 8-9.
27. In addition to the references collected by Dagron, Naissance d'une capitale, 505-6, 512-3, see, for example, Patria, ed. Th. Preger, III, 73, 107; Migne, PG, 86, 2336-6; Vita-Euthymii, ed. P. Karlin-Hayter (Brussels, 1970), 27; Pseudo-Symeon (Bonn), 628, 645-6; Theoph. Cont. (Bonn), 402; Tzetzes, Chil., IX, 149; Skylitzes, ed. J. Thurn, 94, 384; Neos Hellēnomnēmōn, 8 (1911), 19-20; Actes de Lavra, I, no. 20; R. Naumann and H. Belting, Die Euphemia-Kirche am Hippodrom zu Istanbul und ihre Fresken (Berlin, 1966).
28. For references, see D.M. Nicol, The Despotate of Epiros, 1204-1261 (Oxford, 1957), 54-7 and notes; see also the letters published recently by E. Seferli-Vel in Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher, 21 (1975), nos. 27, 88, 77.
29. Certain themes touched on here were developed quite extensively in the Seventeenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies held at Birmingham in March 1983: I refer particularly to the papers by Simon Ellis, Hugh Kennedy, Charalambos Bouras, Evelyne Patlagean, and Margaret Mullett.
30. Zepos, Ius, I, 265.
31. Chronographia, ed. Rénault, II, 142.
32. Zonaras (Bonn), III, 767; cf. Theodore Prodromos, ed. E. Kurtz, BZ, 16 (1907), 113.
33. MM, VI, 5-6.



34. E.g. Vita Basilii Iunioris, AASS, Mar., III, 28ff; Vita S. Mariae Iunioris, AASS Nov., IV, 692.
35. Either through lack of ambition, as implied by Symeon the New Theologian (above n.17), or through political disgrace, as in the case of Niketas Magistros: on his place of exile, see L. Westerink, Niketas Magistros, Lettres d'un exilé (Paris, 1973), 31-3.
36. Anna Comnena, Alexiad, ed. Leib, II, 171.
37. For a good early twelfth-century example, see Actes de Docheiariou, ed. N. Oikonomides (Paris, 1984), no. 4, pp. 86-7.
38. G. Bertolotto, Nuova serie di documenti sulle relazioni di Genova con l'Impero bizantino. Atti della Società ligure di Storia patria, 28 (1898), Appendix (Rome, 1902), 100 ff; MM, III, 55-7. and translations in appendix to this volume, pp. 254-62.
39. Ibid.
40. Migne, PG, 127, 1120.
41. See below, notes 56-60.
42. John Apokaukos, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus in Sbornik Statej Lamanskomu, I (St. Petersburg, 1907), 245-6.
43. Constantine Akropolites mentions that he had one in his house: ed. C.N. Constantinides, Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (Nicosia, 1982), 163-4.
44. See, for example, the texts cited by Ph. Koukoules, Byzantinôn bios kai politismos, IV, 294-307; also Nikephoros Xanthopoulos' ekphrasis of a hall built by Andronikos II: Migne, PG, 145, 585-6.
45. Ed. R. Browning, 'An Unpublished Address of Nicephorus Chrysoberges to Patriarch John X Kamateros of 1202', Byzantine Studies/Etudes Byzantines, 5 (1978), p.49.
46. Digenes Akritas, ed. & tr. J. Mavrogordato, VII, 42ff.; Metochites, ed. R. Guillard, 'Le palais de Théodore Métochite', Revue des Études Grecques, 35 (1922), 86-92. Cf. C. Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312-1453, Sources and Documents (Englewood Cliffs, 1972), 215-6, 246-7; I. Ševčenko in The Kariye Djami, ed. P. Underwood, IV (Princeton, 1975), 31 n. 97.
47. A.K. Orlandos, Monasteriakê Arkhitektonikê (Athens, 1927).
48. Koukoules, IV, 261-5. Cf. I. Ševčenko, 'Alexios Makrembolites and his "Dialogue between the rich and the poor"', ZRVI, 6 (1960), 221 and n.10 (reprinted in idem, Society and Intellectual Life in Late Byzantium (London, 1981); Theophylact of Ochrid, ed. P. Gautier, Nicéphore Bryennios (Brussels, 1975), 327.
49. Actes de Lavra, III, nos. 127 and 141; Chrysobull of John V for the monastery of the Anargyroi at Constantinople, ed. E. Lappa-Zizica, TM, 8 (1981), 268; Byzantis, 2 (1911), 82; ZRVI, 18 (1978), 160-1 and n.11. Alexios Apokaukos aroused the suspicions of Andronikos III by fortifying his house at Epibatai: Gregoras (Bonn), II, 602-3.
50. The fortification of the Great Palace was completed by Nicephorus II, and that of the Blachernai by Andronikos III: Leo Diaconus (Bonn), 64; Gregoras (Bonn), I, 496.
51. For a general impression, see the plans published by S. Miranda, Les palais des empereurs byzantins (Mexico City, 1964).
52. See D. Jacoby, 'La population de Constantinople à l'époque byzantine', B, 31 (1960), 81-109.
53. See, for example, the palace of Romanos Lekapenos at the Myrelaion: C.L. Striker, The Myrelaion (Bodrum Camii) (Princeton, 1982).
54. Skylitzes, ed. Thurn, 481; Beck, 'Gefolgschaftswesen', 27.
55. The Latin word was used by Byzantines: e.g. Patria, ed. Preger, I, 64; John Apokaukos, ed. Seferli-Vel, 75.
56. Guillard, 'Le palais de Théodore Métochite', 91.
57. Migne, PG, 111, 684, 689, 693, 700. For the date of this text, see now C. Mango, 'The Life of St. Andrew the Fool Reconsidered', Revista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi, 2 (1982), 297-313 (reprinted in idem, Byzantium and its Image (London, 1984), no. VIII).
58. M.-H. Fourmy and M. Leroy, 'La Vie de S. Philarète', B, 9 (1934), 139.
59. Vita Sancti Basilii Iunioris, ed. Vilinsky, 38.
60. J. Noret, Vitae duae antiquae Sancti Athanasii Athonitae, Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, 9 (Turnhout, 1982), 8.
61. See above, P. Magdalino, Chapter 4 n.80; Michael Choniates, ed. Sp. Lampros (Athens, 1879), I, 9; Kazhdan, Sotsialnyj sostav, 238-40.
62. Verses addressed to Manuel I, ed. A. Maiuri, BZ, 23 (1920), 399, vv.14ff.
63. Odo of Deuil, ed. Berry, 24-6; Choniates, ed. Van Dieten, 410; Kazhdan, Sotsialnyj sostav, 55-6.
64. Theodore of Studium, Catachesis no. 35, cited by N. Oikonomides in La paléographie grecque et byzantine, Colloques internationaux du C.R.N.S., no. 559 (Paris, 1977), 397; Oikonomides, Listes de préséance, 317.

65. Above, p.3.
66. *Vita Sancti Basilii iunioris*, ed. Vilinsky, 9. The house, near the Baths of Arcadius, was later assigned to visiting Armenian princes and then occupied by the *parakoimōmenos* Basil (Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De Administrando Imperio*, p.190 = cap. 43, 11.66ff). According to the *Patria*, Basil's house had originally belonged to the fifth-century Aspar (ed. Preger II, 71).
67. Nicholas Kataphloros in *Scor. gr. Y-II-10*, fol. 325 r.
68. Ed. L. Sternbach, *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts*, 5 (1902), Beiblatt 83.
69. Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 15-63; English translation by Sp. Vryonis Jr., *DOP*, 11 (1957), 263-77.
70. Ed. Ioakeim Iberities, *Orthodoxia*, 5 (1930), 613-8; 6 (1931), 346-71; cf. Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 161, n.102.
71. *Actes de Chilandar*, ed. L. Petit, Supplement to *VV*, 17 (1911), no. 27, pp.59-64.
72. Ed. G.I. Theokharides, *Mia diathēkē kai mia dikē byzantinē* (Thessaloniki, 1962), 17-28.
73. *Ibid.*, 51 ff; E. Zakhariadou, in *Makedonika*, 6 (1964-5), 62-74.
74. Theokharides, *op. cit.*, p.26, line 175. It is not clear whether the *aulē* in question was the one where the monastery was eventually built (see p.22, line 89ff).
75. For *paidopoula*, see also Pachymeres (Bonn), I, 23-4; M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile* (Oxford, 1975), 176-7.
76. There is a large literature on the worldly status of Byzantine monasteries. Among recent discussions, see in particular Lemerle's analysis of three eleventh-century religious foundations (*Cinq Études*, nos. 1-3); Ioannes Konidares' study of the law of monastic property (Athens, 1979, in Greek); and see below, R. Morris, Chapter 7, 112ff.
77. Ed. Gautier, *REB*, 39 (1981), 52-5; cf. Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 99ff.
78. Migne, *PG*, 127, 1008-9; H. Delehay, *Deux typica byzantins de l'époque des Paléologues*, *Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques*, 2nd ser., 13 (1921), 128-9.
79. Migne, *PG*, 127, 1108ff.
80. Delehay, *Deux typica*, 9-14, 18ff.; for the iconography and prosopography of the portraits, see I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 190ff.; A. Cutler & P. Magdalino, 'Some precisisions on the Lincoln Typikon', *Cahiers Archéologiques*, 27 (1977), 179-98.

81. C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York, 1976), 266ff.
82. Delehay, *Deux typica*, 102-5.
83. Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, I (Princeton, 1966), 295-99; Pseudo-Brocardus in *Recueil des historiens des croisades, Documents arméniens*, II (Paris, 1906), 375. Several poems written by the 'Manganeios' Prodomos to console the *Sebastokratorissa* Eirene for her fall from imperial favour were read out in the church in her *oikos*: ed. E. Miller, *Annuaire de l'Association pour l'encouragement des études grecques*, 17 (1883), 20ff.
84. Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, 186ff.
85. Ed. Gautier, *REB*, 32 (1974), 45.
86. M. Živojinović, in *ZRVI* 8/2 (1964), 483-92. Nicholas Kataphloros in *Scor. gr. Y-II-10*, fols. 331v-332r.
87. Ed. L. Petit, *Izvestija Russkago Arkheologicheskago Instituta v Konstantinopole*, 13 (1908), 1-61. On the monastery buildings, see A.K. Orlandos, *Thrakika*, 4 (1933), 7ff., and on Isaac and his family, F. Chalandon, *Les Comnène*, II (Paris, 1912), 15-18, 83-5, 179, 216, 220-1.
88. Underwood, *Kariye Djami*, I, 12-3.
89. On the legal status of dowry property, see A. Laiou, 'The Role of Women in Byzantine Society', XVI. Internationaler Byzantinisten Kongress, *Akten* 1/1, *JÖB*, (= *Akten des XVI internationaler Byzantinistenkongress*, 1/1) 31/1 (1981), 237ff. Isaac's other known child, John, had defected to the court of Iconium in 1140: Choniates, ed. Van Dieten, 35-6.
90. Although Isaac had been restored to favour for the second time on Manuel's accession, he again came under suspicion three years later: Cinnamus (Bonn), 32, 53.

## CHAPTER 7 - THE BYZANTINE ARISTOCRACY AND THE MONASTERIES

Rosemary Morris

The admiration, if not veneration, in which Byzantines held the monastic life was common to all classes in society. For monasticism provided them with a model of the most perfect worldly life, that which might hope to approach the ideal - the angelikos bios enjoyed by the saints in Heaven. Theodore of Stoudios, with his usual perspicacity, indicated the importance of monasticism in Byzantine theological tradition:

"Certain people ask, whence arose the tradition of renouncing the world and of becoming monks? But their question is the same as asking whence came the tradition of becoming Christians?"<sup>1</sup>

The "monastic perfection" was one of the six mysteries laid down by Christ and was to be revered with others, such as the eucharist, the priesthood and the perfection of the chrism. It is not surprising that Theodore should have praised the monastic cause, associated as it was with the defence of the icons and their place in orthodox worship. But, in writing of monastic perfection, he reminded Byzantines of one of the chief purposes of monasticism, that of providing a haven where men and women, "in the world but not of it", might hope to grow in spiritual stature whilst sloughing off its cares and vanities. How might this best be done? On the face of it, the communal or coenobitic life might be deemed the more worthy. As St. Basil's Monastic Constitutions, the guide (though in no sense the Rule) for many Byzantine communities, clearly explained, the common life was one in which

"Personal property is discarded, the conflict of wills is eradicated and all tumult, strife and conflicts are trampled underfoot. All is held in common; souls, thoughts, bodies."<sup>2</sup>

This was a truly common and unselfish life and the physical conditions in which this spiritual unity might be achieved had been clearly stated in Justinian's legislation:

"In all the monasteries which are called koinobia we order that, according to the monastic canons, all should live in one habitation and sleep in one dormitory."<sup>3</sup>

True askêsis might be achieved by the subordination of individual desires and aspirations to the will of the brotherhood. Obedience and submission were to be manifested in uniformity of dress, labour (whether spiritual or manual) and in limitations on movement. If the

coenobitic life were followed strictly, then, according to the Testament of Theodore of Stoudios "the monastic state is sublime and he who leads it is purged of sin at the end of his life".<sup>4</sup>

But there was another pattern of ascetic life which held many attractions for Byzantines. The lavriote tradition, epitomised in the career of the desert father, St. Anthony, emphasised the spiritual development of the individual and provided a model in the athlêtês, who, by his self-denigration and solitary struggle fought and won spiritual battles against the temptations of the flesh and reached a higher askêsis by subjecting his body to rigorous spiritual exercises, fasting and humiliation, so that he became almost wholly spirit and thus nearly angelic in substance.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to the coenobitic style, lavriote monasticism, where monks lived alone in loose confederations, meeting only for a weekly Eucharist, emphasised the individual endeavour. The will was not to be sublimated to the common desire of the community, it was to be actively employed in a struggle with the forces of darkness.

By the eleventh century, however, the moment at which we can begin to identify the leading families of Byzantium, the monastic communities could no longer be thus clearly characterised. In monasteries which we may conveniently term "hybrid" - on Athos, on Mount Latros in Asia Minor and, later, on Patmos - the laity could enter houses which provided a coenobitic life for the majority but which allowed those chosen for their worthiness to spend the later years of their vocation in solitude.<sup>6</sup>

Which monastic style was most favoured by the Byzantine aristocracy? To answer this question, one must first pose another: what role did monasticism play in the lives of Byzantine aristocrats, those who had been marked out by birth or office to wield political or economic power? A short response would be that many spiritual attitudes were commonly held by the highest Byzantine grandees as well as the humblest provincial peasant. When the eleventh century general and provincial landowner Kekaumenos declared that one should "seek frequently the company of monks"<sup>7</sup> he was articulating a generally held view. From the establishment of the small, local oratories, containing less than ten monks, that we hear about in a Novel of Basil II,<sup>8</sup> to the grand foundations of the aristocracy, the motive was essentially the same. The monastic life was a better life. To live it or patronise it (however humbly) was an act which would bring spiritual rewards. As far as the aristocracy was concerned, the difference was one of scale. Their wealth or their landowning or, indeed, their office-holding, enabled them to express their admiration for the monastic life by patronising it. Their distance from the productive functions of farming or trade presented them with a greater opportunity to practise it.

As with much else, fashions in monastic patronage are distinctly visible amongst the aristocracy. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, the hey-day of the holy mountains and the charismatic monastic founders, aristocratic association with houses such as those on Latros, Kyminas and, above all Athos, may clearly be seen. Evelyn Patlagean has shown how many hagiographies of this period contain a double form of aristocratic reference. The subject of the life, though almost invariably described as coming from the "middling

sort", is often placed into a relationship of acquaintance with members of aristocratic families. Evaristos of Stoudios's father was related to the wife of a member of the Bryennios family; St. Athanasios of the Lavra had a childhood friend who married the son of the stratêgos Zephinezer; the Life of St. Philaretos, written in the ninth century is, in parts, nothing more than a genealogical celebration of the family from which the Empress Maria, wife of Constantine VI, came.<sup>9</sup> But there were, of course, monastic founders who themselves came from the ranks of the aristocracy. In this period, perhaps the most famous was Michael Maleinos, himself a member of an important Cappadocian family and furthermore uncle by marriage to the Emperor Nicephorus Phokas. Similarly, one may cite the Abbess Eirene of Chrysobalanton, whose sister was married to the Caesar Bardas, the powerful uncle of Michael III.<sup>10</sup>

But another form of aristocratic "connection", to which we shall return, is a common feature of hagiography of all periods. The presence of aristocrats amongst those who come to consult the holy men in their houses is meticulously chronicled by the writers of saints' lives and it is hard to escape the feeling that the attraction of important "names" to a house was deemed a mark of the success and holy reputation of its founder. Byzantines relished these spiritual "gossip columns"; an all too recognisable and relatively harmless human trait.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, the holy men still held a place of esteem and affection in the hearts of Byzantines of whatever station. By the twelfth century, however, a degree of suspicion of the motives of the charismatic monastic leaders and certainly their more eccentric and exhibitionist brethren - the holy fools, the bearers of chains and manacles, the stylites - was clearly evident. John Tzetzes voiced a widespread feeling of disgust in educated circles when he wrote, supposedly to his runaway slave Demetrius Gobinos (a literary conceit which should make us wary of taking the contents too literally):

"For now every disgusting and thrice accursed wretch like you has only to put on a monastic habit ... immediately the city of Constantinople showers him with honours ... Leading ladies and not a few men of the highest birth consider it a great thing to fit out their private chapels, not with icons of saintly men ... but with the leg-irons and fetters and chains of these accursed villains."<sup>11</sup>

A fashion on the turn, perhaps? Or the comment of an educated and cultured man on the popular style of spirituality still evident amongst the rich and well-born? At any rate, the patronage of coenobitic establishments (or those in which the solitary style was only available to a few especially virtuous monks) already evident by the eleventh century, seems to have continued even as the fortunes of the holy men and their circles began to wane.

This is hardly surprising, for the coenobitic houses provided the possibility of a more lasting fulfilment of spiritual goals than could the career of one individual, however saintly, and an important, if not paramount activity of the koinobia was the performance of the liturgy and especially the offerings of prayers and

intercessions. For the power of prayer was one of the strongest political and social weapons at the disposal of the aristocracy in Byzantium. At the highest level, the prayers of monks were consistently invoked by the holders of the imperial power. A speech by Constantine Porphyrogenitus to be delivered to the armies of the eastern themes as they left to campaign against Tarsus in 958, assured them that:

"having called upon the most holy fathers who sit upon the mountains and in caves and in holes in the ground for their prayers, and having exhorted them for their supplications, we have ordained that they should unceasingly offer prayers on your behalf. We have also commanded that the same shall be done in the churches and monasteries of the God-guarded city".<sup>12</sup>

The duty of monks to pray for the emperor in times of peace is a frequent theme of monastic documents. An early document for the Lavra on Mt. Athos compared the house to a haven from which prayers would be sent up to aid the foundering ship of state,<sup>13</sup> and in a letter sent to the Emperor Alexius (contained in the so-called Diêgêsis Merikê), the monks emphasised their concern for the Emperor's welfare:

"For in Your peace we lead a solitary and ascetic life, praying for the rule of Your Imperial Majesty, that God may grant it many years, as he did the pious King Hezekiah, so that both he and You might be deemed worthy to come into the presence of the Lord God in Heaven".<sup>14</sup>

The emperor was, by definition, both autocrat and aristocrat; in this sense the services performed for him by monks were but the reproduction on a more august level of those provided for others of high rank. Protection of themselves, their families and their enterprises was particularly important for those who moved in the dangerous circles of power within the Byzantine state.

The hagiographers were all too willing to provide us with information about the visits of aristocrats to monastic houses, though they often displayed an infuriating tendency to surround their true motives in alluring mystery. But, in many cases, aristocrats wanted advice and protection both in the form of prayers and, one suspects, in the more tangible shape of information. They also came, as did pious peasants, to monastic houses for cures and talismans. The eleventh century foundations of St. Lazaros on Mt. Galesion in western Asia Minor may stand as examples of houses frequently visited by the aristocracy for a number of reasons.<sup>15</sup> The prôtospatharios Leo Basilitzes had his hand cured; the stratêgos Romanos Skleros paid a visit and his sister Maria Skleraina (the mistress of Constantine Monomachos) took an interest in the fortunes of the monks. An unnamed member of the Makrembolites family (surely a relative of Eudokia, the wife of Constantine Doukas) gained a prophecy of his future fortunes from St. Lazaros, though we do not know what it was.<sup>16</sup> To take another well-known example, that of the career of St. Cyril of Philea (d.1110): what might have prompted the visits to his monastery of Constantine Khoirosphactes, scion of a family known in Byzantium for at least a hundred years previously, of the celebrated

doux Eumathios Philokales and George Palaiologos, the brother-in-law of the Emperor Alexius Comnenus himself? The *Life of St. Cyril* does not explicitly tell us. But they might have come for the same reason as Anna Dalassena, Alexius's mother. She was a spiritual daughter of St. Cyril and came to him for moral precepts and guidance. But she also came, it would appear, to gather news of more worldly events. Like many a suppliant, she received a prophecy from the holy *hēgoumenos*, in this case that her son would ascend the imperial throne.<sup>17</sup>

It is difficult to know what to make of the prophecies so often dispensed by monastic figures in Byzantium. On the one hand, we cannot doubt that Byzantines took them at face value and unquestioningly believed that there were particularly holy individuals, especially monks, to whom God had granted second sight as a mark of their worth. On the other, more prosaically, it must be acknowledged that the heads of monastic houses were in a position to provide useful, confidential intelligence. Their contacts with the "great and the good" were excellent, their loyalty to and partisanship of, particular families was well known. What was viewed by Byzantines as divine revelation must also seem to us to have been the workings of an extremely effective intelligence service. Indeed, the fourteenth century western writer William Adam, less awe-struck than his eastern contemporaries perhaps, alleged that the monastic houses in Constantinople were often the meeting places for conspiratorial gatherings, and it has been pertinently pointed out that the "spiritual family" itself was a "potentially subversive and centrifugal association".<sup>18</sup> The value to aristocrats of a source of reliable, but confidential information to help them navigate the dangerous waters of Constantinopolitan politics was considerable and what appears in hagiographies as miraculous revelations may simply have been the expression of the workings of this nexus of relationships and alliances.

But however significant this activity was for the political life of the Empire, it centred on the granting of advice, essentially the same process as the few simple words of guidance given to a community stricken by drought or to a peasant suffering from diabolic visions.<sup>19</sup> The aristocracy were participating in an activity which, at its basic level, had no particular social cachet. Of far more importance was the formation of fashionable circles of aristocrats around certain monastic fathers. This was an activity which was made possible by the more leisured life of the aristocrat, especially the well-born lady. Although monks were at the centre of these circles, they did not always gather in monasteries. That strange tenth-century saint, Basil the Younger, gave instruction to a group of ladies including the Empress in the house of one of them; Symeon the "New Theologian" met a group of like-minded disciples in the home of a private gentleman Christopher Phagouras.<sup>20</sup> For a curious aspect of aristocratic spirituality, at least as reflected in the sources, is the sparseness of references to the activities of secular priests in the houses of the great. Alexius Comnenus had a series of household chaplains, as his daughter Anna relates, but all of them seem to have been monks.<sup>21</sup> We can only speculate on the reasons for this apparent preference for the company of monks. Was it that they were on the whole better educated either in secular terms or in spiritual? Was it, perhaps, that there were more monks than secular clergy in Byzantium in general and in the great cities in particular? Or are we dealing with another facet of the admiration by all levels of

Byzantine society for the monastic habit?

Aristocrats living dangerous lives in the convoluted political atmosphere of Byzantium sought monastic guidance and support, but this support was not only limited to the problems of the present. Death and the hereafter were also prime concerns. Like all his compatriots, the aristocrat was concerned to prepare himself as well as possible for death. It is impossible to over-emphasise the seriousness with which Byzantines contemplated this prospect. The active steps they took to prepare themselves for its inevitability are proof enough of their concern.<sup>22</sup> Men and women of quite humble station made wills (a task particularly necessary in a society which governed its inheritance patterns not by custom, but by the divisions specified in Roman Law) and those made by aristocrats provide a mine of information about land and property holding as well as spiritual orientation.<sup>23</sup> Steps were also taken to promote spiritual fortunes, and amongst the aristocracy, the association of an individual with a monastic house that would concern itself with the health of his soul was an important incentive to patronage.

The concern with these various forms of spiritual insurance manifested in foundation and patronage indicates a surprising degree of uncertainty about the fate of the individual soul after death and the view that this could be influenced. In the early middle ages the Byzantines found it difficult to envisage the fate of those who were neither saints to be borne by angels directly into heaven, nor inveterate sinners to be cast immediately into Hell.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, in the eleventh century and after, the concept of Purgatory, so familiar to the Latins, was to be one of the major points of disagreement between the Eastern and Western churches.<sup>25</sup> In Western eyes, if no "fruits of repentance" were to be found in the individual's actions before death, then "satisfaction" in the form of "purgatory pains" was to be exacted.<sup>26</sup> Byzantine theologians, in contrast, interpreting sin as a moral disease which could be cured by divine forbearance, rather than as a crime to be punished by divine wrath, did not allow that any state of bliss (or conversely, condemnation) could be firmly assigned to ordinary mortals until the Last Judgement. But during the time of waiting for this event, the soul was deemed (in one popular and typically bureaucratic image) to pass through a series of *telōnia*, spiritual customs-gates manned by angelic officials. Each of the gates represented a venial sin such as falsehood, pride or fornication and it was here that the prayers of the indubitably good, in particular the monks, were believed to be of considerable spiritual benefit.<sup>27</sup> A curious passage in the *Chronicle* of Theophanes Continuatus deals with the results of such monastic intercession in imagery which is again distinctly fiscal. As a result of the entreaties of the monks of the holy mountain of Olympos in Asia Minor, the total *telos* of the sins of the Emperor Romanos Lekapenos was erased by the Recording Angel in just the same way as an exemption or lightening of taxes was customarily noted.<sup>28</sup>

The most important spiritual role played by the monastic houses founded by aristocrats was that of channelling prayers and intercessions. From the eleventh century onwards, the building and endowment of large coenobitic houses became increasingly common amongst the aristocracy. The existence of some of their foundation *typika* enables some analysis to be made both of the extent of the donations



and of the motivation of the donors.

The consideration of a sample of monastic typika - those of the monastery founded by Gregory Pakourianos at Bačkovo; of the Empress Eirene Doukaina's house of the Theotokos Kekharitomenes (c.1118); the monastic and medical complex of the Pantokrator founded by the Emperor John Comnenus; the Nunnery of Our Lady of Good Hope, the house which was the subject of the Lincoln College Typikon, and those founded by members of the bureaucratic aristocracy such as Michael Attaleiates - reveals, first and foremost, detailed provision for the commemoration of the founders. The day of the founder's death was celebrated more lavishly than any other feast, save, perhaps, that of the saintly patron of the house.<sup>29</sup> John Comnenus's Typikon for the Pantokrator Monastery devotes a great deal of space to the minutiae of the commemoration of his father Alexius, his wife and his son, as well as himself. The monks of the monastery and the personnel of the hospital and its attendant priests were to assemble in the Church of the Theotokos with all those patients who could move

"Let them form a procession and recite 'Remember, O Saviour, for thou art mindful of Thy servants' and 'Rest with the saints' and 'Fervent Intercession'. Then they shall say a litany and recite four Kyrie Eleisons and 'God will bless the founders'; they will take a diaklysmos and will retire. For the diaklysmos there shall be provided four modioi (thalassioi) of offertory bread, and four similar measures of wine. The doctors and all the other personnel of the hospital shall receive, at the moment of departure, four nomismata hyperpera, and each of forty ... invalids one nomisma trachy. This shall occur on each procession of commemoration. For each of the processions throughout the year, there shall be provided sixteen great torches, which will be given to the primikerioi to be lighted at the beginning of the procession".<sup>30</sup>

John then goes on to list, in similarly precise detail, the food that should be provided for the meals after these services, partly solemn remembrances and partly, one suspects, opportunities for subdued jollity.

It is the prescribed prayers that give us the clearest indication of the purpose of the occasion; the presentation to God of intercessions on behalf of the pious founder by the grateful recipients of his charity. These would be strengthened by the prayers of the monks of the foundation, for, as John writes elsewhere in the Typikon:

"We present to you a choir of ascetics, a precious community of Nazarenes, of men obliged to stay with their monastery and beg Your mercy for our sins... We offer these monks to You as ambassadors for the pardon of our sins; we solicit Your favour by their actions; we beg for Your compassion through them."<sup>31</sup>

Many of these requests were, of course, couched in the most traditional and formalised of language and may be seen echoed in the typika or testaments of much humbler men such as the will of the monk

Genesios, drawn up in southern Italy in 1086. Though a landowner of substance, it is not clear whether one could cite Genesios as an aristocrat, simply because we do not know either his secular name or of any rank he may have held. But the sentiments he expresses in what is, in fact, his second will, could be found in any of the aristocratic documents of the same period.<sup>32</sup> The reason for the drawing up of the document was the classic one of sickness and "seeing, as in a mirror, the certainty of my end". Like many aristocrats, Genesios had already entered a monastery to prepare for death and "decided to separate myself from the confusion of this troublesome world". The property he left to his epitropos to be managed until his death was to be sold after it, and the money was to be used by the monks of his monastery "for my soul's safety on the appointed days" - precisely the same process that we see in the Typikon of the Pantokrator. The role of the clergy was "to pray for me unceasingly and for my progenitors".<sup>33</sup> Genesios's will may not have been drawn up with quite the same rhetorical flourish as those of greater men, but the similarity of expression and aspiration is marked and again emphasises the degree of uniformity in spiritual orientation - in Byzantine literate society, at least.

As both Genesios and John Comnenus indicate, their concern was not entirely self-centred. They wished the spiritual protection they themselves sought to extend to their relatives as well. Discussion of the nature of the Byzantine aristocratic family is the province of other papers in this collection, but of present concern is the evidence available from monastic sources on the problem of whether the aristocracy thought more in terms of families or kin-groups.<sup>34</sup> It is clear from the monastic documents that the family was the unit uppermost in the minds of founders and patrons - and a family within limits, at that. In his study of fifteenth-century English charity and foundation, J.T. Rosenthal noted that the most common commemorations (apart from those of the donor himself) were for his parents. There were few mentions of siblings. In the case of the male donor, few references were made to his wife's parents, an indication, perhaps, that their spiritual as well as their economic welfare was deemed to be the responsibility of her brothers. The family relationship (as drawn up in the documents of donation, or in wills) was essentially vertical; it moved up and down the lineage from generation to generation. "Spiritually if not politically", concludes Rosenthal, "the family was a nucleated one".<sup>35</sup> Primogeniture may well have had a great deal to do with this state of affairs. In Byzantine typika and other dispositions, the range of relationships included in the commemorations was somewhat wider, but by no means all-embracing. Although members of the eleventh - and twelfth-century aristocracy were proud to vaunt their family connections by piling the Pelion of their own names on the Ossa of all the celebrated families to which they could claim even distant kinship, this habit was manifestly not extended to the formulation of their monastic typika. One might vulgarly suggest that this was mainly to prevent the prayers being "spread too thinly", but it does also reveal the limits within which Byzantine aristocrats deemed their true - as opposed to their ceremonial - families to lie.<sup>36</sup> Figures 1 and 2 show how their concern was limited in John Comnenus's Typikon of the Pantokrator and in the so-called Lincoln College Typikon.

Fig. 1 Relatives commemorated in the Typikon of the Pantokrator Monastery, Constantinople (1136)

| <u>Name:</u>                       | <u>Relationship to donor</u>        |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| John Comnenus                      | DONOR                               |
| Alexius Comnenus                   | Father                              |
| Anna Dalassena                     | Grandmother                         |
| Eirene Doukaina                    | Mother                              |
| Eirene of Hungary                  | Wife                                |
| kouropalates John Comnenus         | Grandfather                         |
| protovestiariissa Maria (Xenê)     | Grandmother                         |
| Andronikos Doukas                  | Grandfather (husband of Maria)      |
| sebastocrator Isaac Comnenus       | Uncle                               |
| Eudokia                            | Daughter-in-law, wife of s. Alexius |
| sebastocrator Andronikos (Eudokia) | Brother<br>Sister                   |
| Nicephorus Bryennios               | Brother-in-law                      |
| Nicephorus Katakalon Euphorbenos   | Brother-in-law                      |
| megas domestikos Adrian Comnenus   | Uncle                               |
| Zoe Doukaina                       | Aunt by marriage (wife of Adrian)   |
| Manuel Comnenus                    | Uncle                               |
| caesar Nicephorus Melissenos       | Uncle by marriage                   |
| caesarissa Eudokia Melissena       | Aunt                                |
| panhypersebastê Maria Comnena      | Aunt (wife of Michael Taronites)    |
| Theodora Comnena (Xenê)            | Aunt (wife of Constantine Diogenes) |
| prôtostratôr Michael Doukas        | Uncle                               |
| megas doux John Doukas (Anthony)   | Uncle                               |
| sebastos George Palaiologos        | Brother-in-law of Eirene Doukaina   |
| un-named                           | Aunt (Theodora Doukaina) (Xenê)     |
| Anna Doukaina                      | Aunt (wife of George Palaiologos)   |

N.B. Monastic names thus (Xenê)

As can be seen, the list is lengthy. The donor's children, grandchildren (or rather one grandchild, since the others were presumably still alive at the time the Typikon was drawn up), parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters and their spouses, and uncles and aunts on both sides of the family are all mentioned.<sup>38</sup> In contrast, the family group in the Lincoln College Typikon (that of the Convent of Good Hope) is more limited (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2 Relatives commemorated in the Typikon of the Convent of Our Lady of Good Hope (Constantinople)

| <u>Name:</u>                             | <u>Relationship to donor</u> |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Theodora (Theodoulê)                     | FOUNDER                      |
| John Comnenus (Joachim)                  | Husband                      |
| sebastokrator Constantine (Kallinikos)   | Father                       |
| Eirene Comnena Branaina                  |                              |
| Palaeologina (Maria)                     | Mother                       |
| Michael (Makarios)                       | Brother                      |
| Andronikos (Arsenios)                    | Brother                      |
| Maria (Mariamne)                         | Sister                       |
| Theodora, Queen of Bulgaria              | Sister                       |
| Isaac Comnenus Doukas Tornikes (Joaseph) | Husband of sister Maria      |
| Andronikos (Anthony)                     | Their son                    |
| John Comnenus Doukas Synadenos           | Founder's son                |
| Thomas (Xenê)                            | His wife                     |
| Theodore                                 | Founder's son                |
| Eudokia                                  | His wife                     |
| Theodora (Theodosia)                     | Their daughter               |
| Theodore Doukas Mouzakios (Theodoret)    | Eudokia's father             |
| Na (Euphrosyne)                          | Founder's daughter           |
| Anna                                     | Grand-daughter               |
| Euphrosyne                               | Grand-daughter               |
| Eirene                                   | Grand-daughter               |
| Anna                                     | Grand-daughter               |
| John Comnenus (Joaseph)                  | Son of Queen of Bulgaria     |

N.B. Monastic names in brackets

The foundress mentions her husband, her parents (but not his), her brothers and sisters (but, again, not her husband's), one nephew, her children, the father-in-law of one of them (probably because he became a monk), their spouses and four of her grandchildren. We must bear in mind, of course, that in practically all cases, the relatives mentioned were already deceased (a process of selection in itself), but they still lie within a reasonably restricted vertical grouping.<sup>39</sup> In both cases, the commemorations do not extend beyond the founder's own parents. Neither of these typika expresses any concept of a long ancestral line. Nor are there many references to the sons and daughters of the founder's siblings; most of them were clearly still alive when the documents were drawn up. But what happened to their commemoration after they died? Were they included as a matter of course in supplements to the original lists of memorials? If so, was it by name (which would perhaps be considered of most spiritual benefit) as were other members of the family, or, most generally of all, simply as other Orthodox believers? It is not possible to know for sure, but one may suggest that they were certainly remembered by

the members of the family worshipping in the monasteries containing the bones of their ancestors.

Family solidarity was not only cemented by the memorials celebrated by the monks; it was implicit in the bricks and mortar of the houses in which they lived. The foundation (or re-foundation, since this activity was deemed just as worthy)<sup>40</sup> of a monastery was one way of expressing the acceptance by a family group of the most important spiritual values of the society in which they lived. Donation and foundation revealed two facets of the aristocrat's position. For it was firstly the mark of families on the way up. It is no coincidence that the eleventh century, as well as being the period when aristocratic family groupings become clearly visible was also, as Professor Mango has shown, one of the most active in the building of monasteries and other religious houses.<sup>41</sup> But foundation also marked out a family which had "arrived"; it was tangible evidence that they were wealthy and powerful enough to be taken seriously, to be cultivated with office and to be courted with marriage alliances.

There are many instances of monasteries acting as the focus for expressions of family *esprit de corps*. The future Emperor, Nicephorus Phokas and his brother, Bardas, for instance, patronised the monasteries founded by their uncle Michael Maleinos,<sup>42</sup> and their example could be paralleled many times.<sup>43</sup> But none of the Phokades, so far as is known, awarded these houses on Mount Kyminas the final accolade, that of choosing them as a place of burial, for the siting of tombs in certain monasteries associated these houses for ever with the families concerned. We know, for instance, that by the tenth century, many of the Emperors were customarily buried in two mausolea in the grounds of the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople.<sup>44</sup> But some interesting facts begin to emerge when we begin to enquire not about who did have a tomb in one of these Byzantine *Frogmores*, but who did not.

One reason for avoiding burial there (and overcrowding is not a cogent one, since the oratories could have been extended or new ones built close by) was a wish to establish a set of family tombs elsewhere. Such was the case with the Lekapenos family. The *droungarios* Romanos, having usurped the throne in the mid-tenth century did not stipulate burial in the Church of the Holy Apostles as a means of retrospectively legitimating his rule.<sup>45</sup> Instead, he founded the house of the Myrelaion and it was here that he and the members of his immediate family were buried.<sup>46</sup> By the twelfth century, the establishment of family burial sites in religious houses had become commonplace. John Comnenus mentions in his *Typikon* the wish that his son, Alexius, should be buried in the same tomb, "as I have often remarked to him".<sup>47</sup> The ladies of the family of Theodora Palaiologina and, later, the relatives of the restorer of the nunnery, Xenê Philanthropênê and her daughter, Eugenia Cantacuzena, were probably buried in the cemetery of the Nunnery of Our Lady of Good Hope.<sup>48</sup> The *Typikon* of the re-established house of Lips indicated the place in the Church where the re-foundress, her mother and her daughter should be buried.<sup>49</sup>

Earlier, Constantine Monomachos had been buried near the remains of his mistress, Maria Skleraina in the house of St. George of the Mangana, which he had restored, according to Michael Psellos, with "a

positive river of gold".<sup>50</sup> The same trend was visible in the provinces. The Argyros family seems to have established a family burial site at the Monastery of St. Elizabeth at Kharsianon; the Gabras family possibly at the Monastery of the megalomartyr George at Kheriana.<sup>51</sup>

In most cases, the establishment of a group of family tombs was the final stage of the localisation of family sentiment in a certain house. But there are interesting examples of this process being used to "root" an alien group in a region far from their homeland. Foundations patronised by Georgians in the Balkans and by Normans (doubly alien because of their foreign origin and religious beliefs) helped to establish these groups in new territory. When the Georgian aristocrat and general, Gregory Pakourianos established his monastery at Bačkovo in what is now southern Bulgaria, it marked the culmination of a long process of land accumulation in Thrace and Macedonia, of which the formidable list of chrysobulls which he consigned to Hagia Sophia for safe keeping bears eloquent witness.<sup>52</sup> So Gregory's action in donating lands to a foundation situated in an area in which he already had a considerable interest was a final mark of his identification with it. Although he did not have any children and was thus unable to perpetuate family links through his monastery in the normal way, the same kind of exclusivity was expressed in a different form. Pakourianos forbade Greeks to enter his house; fellow countrymen, in this case Georgians, rather than immediate relatives were charged with the perpetuation of the memory of the donor.<sup>53</sup>

Similarly, the Norman invaders of the Byzantine territories of southern Italy made considerable efforts to associate themselves with existing religious institutions and practices. This is all the more surprising, since, unlike the Georgians, they did not share the same Greek rite. But numerous examples from the rich archival sources for Southern Italy and Sicily bear witness to the same concern to establish roots in a new area and, more importantly, *rapport* with local saints and spiritual leaders. A document from the Cartulary of the Monastery of SS. Elias and Anastasius of Carbone dating from 1092, records the grant of the lands of the abandoned monasteries of S. Nicola di Venegio and S. Zaccaria to this more prosperous house.<sup>54</sup> There is nothing unusual about this donation for the placing of monasteries which had fallen under hard times under the protection and, ultimately, the administration of their more prosperous neighbours was customary in other parts of the Empire. But the action was not taken by a pious Greek, but by the northern Lord of the region, Hugues de Marchese, possibly a German by origin and probably the husband of Cecilia, the sister of the Norman, Bohemond of Taranto.<sup>55</sup> The reasons for his donation were couched in traditional style, doubtless by the Greek scribe of the document:

"It is right and just that to the Holy Churches and monasteries and to the holy monks and abbots serving in them, gifts should always be made, whence they, having their needs supplied, should live without ceasing in prayer for the whole Christian people".<sup>56</sup>

At the highest level too, Bohemond himself (who was hardly pro-Byzantine) can be seen confirming the rights of the Monastery of St. Peter at Taranto over property in the city in a document which looks

admirably Greek, save for the admission that a wax seal has been used "because we do not possess a lead bull".<sup>57</sup> He was acting in just the same way as had his predecessors, the stratēgoi, providing confirmation and, by implication, protection, for the pious donations of the inhabitants of the area without troubling himself over the niceties of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and reform. The culmination of this policy of "assimilation" may be seen in the Norman kingdom of Sicily where Greek ecclesiastical institutions were actively patronised by the Latin monarchs.<sup>58</sup> They were acting, as other outsiders (like Pakourianos) had done, in a way that was expected of aristocrats; they showed by their own actions of patronage and protection that they respected the values of the society in which they found themselves.

Whilst the perpetuation of the memory of the individual or his family could play an important part in aristocratic donation, and the prospect of death could be an important catalyst, donations to religious houses often commemorated other important events in life. Gratitude for a successful period in office, or, in the case of soldiers, a victorious campaign, were also motivating factors. The "Pigeon House" church at Çavusin (which is part of a monastic complex) contains two inscriptions referring to members of the Phokas family portrayed there which may be associated with the campaign waged by Nicephorus Phokas and the Armenian general Melias (Mleh) in Cilicia in 964.<sup>59</sup> In contrast, improper behaviour could be vitiated by donation. A late eleventh, or early twelfth century inscription in the Church of St. Chrysostomos at Koutsoveni in Cyprus declares that the doux of Cyprus, Eumathios Philokales (whom we have already encountered as a member of the circle of Cyril Phileotes),<sup>60</sup> "built unto Thee this church, from the very foundations, to expiate the wicked actions which he has erred in committing."<sup>61</sup>

Motives for donation and patronage were, then, as varied as the reasons men had for prayer. The expression of these feelings was common to all strata of Byzantine society; the aristocracy could express them on a larger scale. Donations of money, precious objects and above all, land, to monastic houses played an important part in the circulation of aristocratic wealth, indeed, it may be said to have constituted a major investment. But how major? We should begin with the premise that no member of an aristocratic family was likely to bankrupt himself or his descendants or compromise their landed inheritance by gifts to monastic foundations or expenditure on their building. Psellos's statements that the Emperor Constantine Monomachos bankrupted the state by his donations may be viewed with some scepticism; these have far more to do with Psellos's view of a golden age (literally, since one of its characteristics was a full treasury) ending with the death of the great Basil II, than with the realities of Byzantine economics.<sup>62</sup> But it is difficult to estimate what proportion of aristocratic wealth was siphoned off in the direction of the monasteries. Some examples from the eleventh century may be cited.

One of the founding fathers of the Tornikios family, the general John Tornik (who later became a monk on Mount Athos) donated 20 litrai of gold (equivalent to 1,440 nomismata) to the house he entered, the Georgian monastery of Iviron.<sup>63</sup> In addition, there exists an interesting list of donors to this house in colophons to a

synodikon of Iviron now in Tbilisi and composed by two scribes, writing in 1074 and from 1074-1116, respectively.<sup>64</sup> Of the forty-nine entries noted, thirty-one comprise sums of less than 100 nomismata and a third of these (nine) are of sums of less than 50 nomismata. These may perhaps reflect gifts of the Georgian "gentry" who probably spent more on houses nearer home, but who wished to associate themselves with Georgia's outpost on the Holy Mountain, by this time recognised as one of the spiritual centres of the Empire.<sup>65</sup> There are, however, larger donations from those who can be identified as aristocrats. The Georgian "upper crust" made donations in the range of 100 to 1,440 nomismata (another example of a gift of 20 litrai of gold from one Irise Purtukhalay). There are four examples of gifts of two litrai, three of three litrai, two of four litrai and one of six litrai. This last was the gift of the Georgian Queen Mariam and her son Constantine Porphyrogenitus and might represent the usual level of high aristocratic donation.<sup>66</sup>

That monetary donations in the region of 100-200 nomismata represented the usual annual expenditure of a member of the civil aristocracy is borne out by the details we possess of the donations made by the chronicler and civil servant Michael Attaleiates. He spent about 150 nomismata each year on his monastic and charitable foundations.<sup>67</sup> Paul Lemerle has estimated that his total revenues may have been in the region of 150 litrai, the equivalent of 10,800 nomismata per annum, so this expenditure represented about one seventieth of his annual revenue.<sup>68</sup> If this is the case, and it can only be conjecture, then Attaleiates was devoting his money to many other causes besides his monastic ones. On the other hand, Pakourianos donated all his estates to Bačkovo, since he had no heirs. The total expenditure provided for in his Typikon, 2,057 nomismata per annum (which includes a sum of 720 nomismata always to be held in reserve) might represent something like the yearly income of his property.<sup>69</sup> At the highest level, the payments of imperial roga to monasteries indicate the upper level of aristocratic donation in the eleventh century. By 1057, the Great Lavra on Athos (alone) received more in imperial roga accumulated since the end of the tenth century than the entire revenues Pakourianos had assigned to Bačkovo and its dependencies.<sup>70</sup> The mountain of Athos as a whole received 2,592 nomismata (or 36 litrai) each year from Alexius Comnenus in 1086.<sup>71</sup> It is a great pity that we do not know much about the later donations to Pakourianos's house, for it would be then possible to further test the hypothesis that success bred success in the monastic sphere as in any other.<sup>72</sup> This is certainly true of Athos, where we do have a run of documentation to consult. Each emperor built on the donations of his successors, each family group made sure that it was remembered on the Holy Mountain.<sup>73</sup>

With such investment of money and personal concern at stake, it is hardly surprising that aristocratic patrons wished to exert firm control over the life and property of the houses they had founded. Their typika usually stipulated that the hēgoumenoi and hēgoumenai should be selected from amongst members of their own families and often, as in the case of the document drawn up for Theodora Palaeologina, stipulated who the first head of the house should be. In this case, it was her daughter Euphrosyne.<sup>74</sup> Those members of aristocratic families that we hear of entering religious houses as children were probably being marked out to succeed older members of their

families at the helm when the time came. Aristocrats also enjoyed other privileges; we know, for example, that both the Typikon of the Pantokrator and that drawn up by Isaac Comnenus for the Monastery of the Kosmosôteira at Verrai allowed them to take servants when they entered the house.<sup>75</sup> The ex-Emperor John Cantacuzenus, although a monk, remained a trusted advisor of the new ruler and left his house of St. George of the Mangana on many occasions to give advice.<sup>76</sup> This kind of favouritism should make us beware of noble sentiments such as those expressed in the Typikon of the Monastery of St. John Prodromos on Mt. Menoikeion in Macedonia where the same John Cantacuzenus was named as patron, protector and ktêtor (founder) - even though the latter honour properly belonged to his father. He had been chosen, it was maintained,

"not only on account of his Christian virtues and the abundance of his goodness, but also because of the piety and faith of his noble ancestors and parents".<sup>77</sup>

The fact that most typika, extolling the virtues of the founding families, were frequently read (that of the Pantokrator once a month)<sup>78</sup> can only have pressed home this kind of subtle propaganda. Aristocrats may have been treated as "more equal than others" in the houses which they entered, but this treatment in no way contravened the Canons of the Church.

A point at issue, however, was the control kept by powerful laymen over lands and their revenues ostensibly given to monastic houses. Here we must beware of the evidence attacking aristocratic interest, for it is almost entirely ecclesiastical, and from the secular church, at that.<sup>79</sup> It is perfectly true that monks clashed with aristocrats over questions of property; a case from the Peira (that eleventh century legal compilation) deals with the monks of an un-named monastery being awarded arrears of emphyteusis rent from a member of the Skleros family.<sup>80</sup> But this was much in the style of every day land disputes. What came under particular attack at the end of the tenth century and during the eleventh, was the so-called kharistikê - the placing of monastic houses under the protection of powerful lay patrons.<sup>81</sup>

The polemical treatise Against the Kharistikarioi written by Patriarch John the Oxite at the end of the eleventh century described the origin of this type of grant, though he erroneously placed its beginnings in the period immediately following the iconoclasm:

"The Emperors and patriarchs transferred monasteries and poor-houses which had been destroyed or were falling into the hands of important men, not in the way of a gift, or a worldly benefit, but in order that they should be put to spiritual use".<sup>82</sup>

His account is corroborated by that of the Patriarch Alexius Stoudites, writing somewhat earlier in 1027. He declared that two factors had influenced the growth of the kharistikê: the aspirations of lay landowners to expand their influence and the declining fortunes of the monasteries. Laymen had gained the kharistikê of monastic houses by promising to take better care of them.<sup>83</sup> Whether they did or not rather depends on the sources one believes, since the issue soon entered the realms of controversy and recrimination. We

may take the example of one eleventh-century kharistikarios (not, admittedly a member of the noblesse de race, rather, that of the noblesse de robe, who has the unusual advantage of being well-documented: Michael Psellos. In a letter to the kritês of the Opsikion theme, Zôma, he detailed the improvements which he proposed to make to the Monastery of Medikion in Bithynia:

"I will purchase cattle and acquire flocks. I will plant vineyards, divert rivers and exploit streams ... and from a hundred measures of wheat I will obtain double, or more than double the yield".<sup>84</sup>

Laudable sentiments, indeed, though we do not know whether they were ever carried out. But the purpose of aristocratic kharistikarioi was undoubtedly to provide precisely this type of investment - ready cash - perhaps when monasteries wished to clear more land or erect churches or other buildings.

Kharistikarioi were also expected to intervene on behalf of their houses with imperial officials, particularly those concerned with the assessment and collection of tax. Although exemption from taxes, an increasingly common phenomenon in monasteries in the eleventh century, was only granted by the Emperor, the process of bringing the houses concerned to his notice and lobbying at court on their behalf was the task of their lay kharistikarioi.<sup>85</sup> Their concern was not, of course, disinterested. They always gained some revenue from the lands they protected and it was the amount they took that brought the whole system into disrepute. John the Oxite complained that the average kharistikarios was notoriously mean: "He grants to the Holy Churches and to the monks the smaller part of the total revenue, giving it to them as if it were his own alms, after much pleading".<sup>86</sup> Examples from the twelfth century indicate that some kharistikarioi unscrupulously stripped the monasteries in their charge. The Typikon issued in 1159 for the restored monastery of St. Mamas in Constantinople declared that the earlier possessions of the house had been dissipated and lost "through the insatiety and shamelessness of the kharistikarioi who held it from time to time and who, like wolves, gaped revenously at it."<sup>87</sup> Another document, of 1164, made further references to the dissipation of the fortune of the house by kharistikarioi and reported that the Patriarch Kosmas had, for this reason, assigned the monastery to George Kappadokes, who had subsequently restored it. George then prevailed upon the Patriarch Nicholas Mouzalon (1147-51) to free it from patriarchal jurisdiction, so that it would not again "fall into the power of unscrupulous (my italics) kharistikarioi."<sup>88</sup> The last phrase is a telling one. For it implies that it was the perversion of the kharistikê system which caused problems, not the system itself. Some further evidence bears out this view. In 1107, the Metropolitan of Athens Niketas, complained to Patriarch Nicholas III that his predecessor in Athens, "a simple, old man", had made grants of monasteries to kharistikarioi who had reduced them to ruins.<sup>89</sup> Clearly, if not kept under firm control by strong-minded ecclesiastics and carried out by reasonably honest kharistikarioi, the system was open to grave abuse. But, as with the history of so many institutions, we hear almost exclusively of the perversion of the kharistikê. We hear of scandalous cases of neglect; we simply do not know how many monasteries, large and small, were saved, or, indeed, made to prosper by the practical piety of



local aristocrats. The attacks on the actions of some kharistikarioi do not take into account the fact that their own financial position may have suffered in a period of war and economic destabilisation. It is no accident that a body of complaint against the kharistikarioi dates from the end of the eleventh century, a period of great instability in the political and economic life of Byzantium. Profits from land holding may well have fallen (for the laity at least) and the temptation to "asset strip" have become irresistible.

In reality the attack on the kharistikarioi was not made on spiritual terms, though it was couched in highly moralistic language, but because of a need to return as much revenue as possible into the hands of the secular church, faced, as it was, with drastic losses of land and income as a consequence of invasion. Whilst an earlier Patriarch, Sergios (1001-1019), could maintain that monasteries and potential benefactors would be unfairly penalised if the kharistikê were banned,<sup>90</sup> by the end of the century, the Patriarch Nicholas Grammatikos (1084-1111) was instigating stringent enquiries into the kharistikê in an attempt to have them registered with the imperial sakellion.<sup>91</sup> After years of deliberate obstruction by the kharistikarioi, he finally, and in some desperation, ordered a census to be taken of all monastic houses and an inquiry to be made into their patrons.<sup>92</sup> Not much notice was taken of this instruction and in many cases his officials were refused entry into the houses they had come to inspect. Although Alexius Comnenus issued a series of edicts, culminating in a novel of 1096 in support of these enquiries (mainly, one suspects in a conciliatory gesture to the church after the debacle of his melting down of ecclesiastical vessels to pay for his campaign against the Normans in the Balkans) evidence that they were pursued is lacking.<sup>93</sup> It would, indeed, have been most incongruous for Alexius to condemn one aspect of aristocratic patronage with one hand, whilst supporting and encouraging other types (such as monetary donations) with the other. We hear little of the kharistikê after the Latin conquest of Constantinople, though examples from the Empire of Nicaea, such as the granting of the Monastery of Amanariotissa to Constantine Monomachos and his brother, the monk Chariton, in 1252, on the understanding that they undertook restoration work, seem very similar.<sup>94</sup> Certainly the Church (or certain critical elements in it) ceased to cavil at the moral issues involved. Indeed, an interesting case dating from about 1400, shows the Patriarch Mathew I and three katholikai kritai<sup>95</sup> supporting the claim by Anna Laskarina Tagarinê to rights in the Monastery of the Theotokos tou Maroulê, which had been placed as a surety for a loan of 45 hyperpera made by its previous holder, Philip Doukas Aprenos.<sup>96</sup>

Economic protection of the monasteries by the aristocracy may have varied in intensity, but their continued enthusiasm for this kind of involvement, often in difficult circumstances, is remarkable. We cannot know for certain, only strongly suggest, that a great deal more aristocratic attention was turned towards monasteries rather than towards churches. For any monastery could offer at least a limited form of exclusivity, which churches could not. Access to churches could not be limited; entry into monasteries could be and was.<sup>97</sup> In many places, of course, the social composition of the monastic body was extremely varied - the monasteries and lavrae on Mount Athos provide good examples - but the same cannot be said of others, such as the Nunnery of Our Lady of Good Hope.<sup>98</sup> Here, as

in other houses, members of aristocratic families could enter a seclusion which still retained a certain degree of familiarity. They could follow their vocation (or that which their family had assigned to them from an early age) in houses which enjoyed active links with the world outside. Without the detailed studies of monastic personnel which would make the question somewhat less of an academic one, it can only be postulated that the majority of aristocrats entered coenobitic or "hybrid" monasteries (where these local and familial ties could best be preserved) and that only a hardy few (such as Michael Maleinos) struck out into the wilderness on their own to found lavrai. Even in these cases, the concern and interest of the family was never far behind.

Although aristocrats were able to undertake the monastic life with more assurance that their temporal family would never be entirely divorced from their spiritual one, it would be a mistake to assert that they did not share the same basic emotions of dedication and, indeed, abnegation, as did their more humble brethren. An admiration of monastic piety was, as we have seen, common to all levels of Byzantine society and those who entered monasteries ranged from members of the imperial family to peasants. In a discussion which has centred on the economic and social significance of aristocratic piety, the matter of faith must not be forgotten. Byzantines of all classes believed in the efficacy of prayer and in the intrinsic superiority of the monastic way of life. But aristocrats, rather than trusting to generalised intercession, possessed the worldly means to concentrate and control these spiritual forces.

# NOTES

1. Theodorus Studita, Epistolae, xx, ii, 65, in Migne, PG, 99, col. 1524 B cited and trans. by J. Meyendorff, Byzantine Theology (1975), p.56.
2. Basilius Caesariensis, Constitutiones monasticae, in Migne, PG, 31, cols. 1521 ff.
3. Justinian, Novella CXXIII, c.36, Corpus Iuris Civilis, edd. T. Mommsen et al., 3 vols. (Berlin, 1928-9), vol. iii, p.619.
4. Sancti Theodori Studitae Testamentum, in Migne, PG, 99, col. 1813 A.
5. For some of the vast literature on the development of Byzantine monasticism, see H.-G. Beck, Kirche und Theologische Literatur im Byzantinischen Reich, (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, xii, 2 (i) Munich, 1959), pp.120-40. St. Athanasios, Life of St. Anthony, trans. R.T. Meyer (Ancient Christian Writers, x, 1950) is fundamental to an understanding of the early tradition of lavriote monasticism. For angelikos bios, see G.W.H. Lampe, A Patristic Greek Lexikon (Oxford, 1961), s.v. angelos, for important early references. A full study of the evolution and use of this term is needed.
6. See the pioneering article of D. Papachryssanthou, 'La vie monastique dans les campagnes byzantines du VIII au XI siècles', REB, 43 (1973), pp.158-82.
7. Kekaumenos Strategikon, edd. B. Wassiliewsky and V. Jernstedt (rep. Amsterdam, 1965), p.49.
8. J. and P. Zepos, Jus Graecoromanum, 8 vols. (Athens, 1931), i, Doc. no. XXIX, pp.267-8. This document is usually dated to 996. For a discussion of some of the textual problems, see N. Svoronos, 'Remarques sur la tradition du texte de la nouvelle de Basile II', ZRVI, 8, (1964), pp.427-34.
9. E. Patlagean, 'Sainteté et Pouvoir', in S. Hackel (ed.), The Byzantine Saint, (London, 1981) pp.88-105, cf. pp.100-1.
10. Vie de S. Michel Maleinos, ed. L. Petit in Revue de l'Orient Chrétien, 7 (1902), pp.543-58. For Eirene of Chrysobalanton, cf. AASS, jul vi, cols. 602-34 and Patlagean, op. cit., pp.91; 101.
11. Trans. P. Magdalino in 'The Byzantine Holy Man in the Twelfth Century', in The Byzantine Saint, pp.51-66; cf. pp. 54-5.
12. H. Ahrweiler, 'Un discours inédit de Constantine VII Porphyrogénète', TM, 2 (1967), pp.393-404, esp. p.395.
13. Actes de Lavra I (Archives de l'Athos V) (Paris, 1970) no. 7 (972).
14. Diâgêsis merikê tôn epistolôn Alexiou basileiôs kai Nicholaou patriarchou, genomenê kata diaphorous kairous, in P. Mayer, Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athos-Klöster (Leipzig, 1894), pp.163-84; cf. p. 166.
15. Vita S. Lazari Galesiotae in AASS, nov. iii, cols. 508-88.
16. Vita S. Lazari, col. 531 (Basilitzes); 536 (Romanos Skleros); 554 (Skleraina); 539 (Makrembolites). For the Skleros family, see W. Seibt, Die Skleroi. Eine prosopographisch-sigillographische Studie (Vienna, 1976).
17. La vie de S. Cyrille le Philéote par Nicholas Kataskéfenos, ed. E. Sargologos (Subs.Haq. 39, Brussels, 1964), p. 314 for Anna Dalassena; c. 35, for Eumathios Philokales, and also Anne Comnène, Alexiade, ed. and trans. B. Leib, 3 vols. (Paris, 1937-45), passim. For George Palaiologos, ibid., I, pp.80-1; 84; 93-4; 95-99; II, p.95.
18. For William Adam, see Magdalino, op. cit., p.64, n.70; n.71 on the danger of holy men.
19. Services best described in P.R.L. Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', JRS, 61 (1971), pp.80-101.
20. Vie de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien par Nicete Stéthate, ed. and trans. I. Hausherr and G. Horn, (OC, 12, Rome 1928), p.146.
21. Anna Comnena, Alexiad, (ed. Leib) I, viii, 2, p.32; ix, 3, p.35.
22. P. Ariès, L'homme devant la mort (Paris, 1977, Eng. trans. 1981) is the indispensable introduction to this subject in the medieval context, but he does not, unfortunately, specifically deal with Byzantium.
23. As far as I know, there is no full study of Byzantine secular wills (as opposed to monastic diathêkai). However, the subject is briefly discussed by Lemerle, Cinq Études, passim. See, also, G. Ferrari, 1 documenti greci medioevali di diritto privato dell'Italia meridionale (Byz. Archiv 4) (Leipzig, 1910), pp.73 ff., 106 ff.
24. See C. Mango, Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome (1980), pp.164-5, for a succinct account of Byzantine beliefs about death.
25. Meyendorff, Byzantine Theology, pp.96; 111; 220-2, discusses the effect of Latin teaching on Purgatory on the late medieval Byzantine Church.
26. Ibid., p.220.
27. G. Every, 'Toll Gates on the Air Way', Eastern Churches Review 8, 2 (1976), pp.139-151. cf. Mango, op. cit., p.164.
28. Theophanes Continuatus (Bonn), p.440. For the erasing of tax dues, logisma, see C.M. Brand, 'Two Byzantine Treatises on Taxation', Traditio, 25 (1969), pp.48-57; cf. pp.50-2.

29. For Bačkovo, see L. Petit, 'Le typikon de Grégoire Pacourianos', *VV, Prilozhenie*, 1 (1904), pp.1-57. P. Lemerle, in *Cinq Etudes*, gives a summary of the typikon and discusses its ms. tradition and contents. For the Nunnery of the Theotokos, tes Kecharitomênês, see *MM*, v, pp.293-321. For the Pantokrator, see P. Gautier, *Le Typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator* (Paris, 1974); the typikon of the Nunnery of Good Hope, (the so-called Lincoln College Typikon) is printed by H. Delehay, 'Deux Typica byzantins de l'époque des Paléologues', in *Synaxaires byzantins, ménologes, typica* (London, 1977), pp.18-105. P. Gautier has recently re-edited the *Typikon of Michael Attaleiates*, cf. 'La diataxis de Michel Attaleiate', *REB*, 39, (1981), pp.5-143.
30. *Typikon of the Pantokrator*, ed. cit., p.89.
31. *Op. cit.*, p.29, as trans. in A.W. Epstein, 'Formulas for Salvation: A Comparison of two Byzantine Monasteries and Their Founders', *Church History*, 1 (1981), no.4, pp.385-400, cf. p.399.
32. *Diatyposis of the Monk Genesios* (1086), *History and Cartulary of the Greek Monastery of St. Elias and St. Asastasius of Carbone*, ed. and trans G. Robinson (*OC* 15, 2) (Rome, 1929), no.12, pp.190-4. Genesios has been tentatively identified by the editor with a prefect of Taranto of the same name.
33. *Loc. cit.*, pp.190; 191; 193.
34. For the nature of the Byzantine aristocratic family, see above, E. Patlagean, Chapter 2, pp.23ff.
35. J.T. Rosenthal, *The Purchase of Paradise* (1972), p.17.
36. For aristocratic genealogy, see above, D.M. Nicol, Chapter 5, pp.79ff.
37. For the lists of names, see *Typikon of the Pantokrator*, pp.41-7; Delehay, 'Deux Typica byzantins', pp.113-9; 122; 135-43.
38. These relationships are discussed by P. Gautier, 'L'obituaire du typikon du Pantocrator', *REB* 27, (1969), pp.235-6.
39. See Delehay, *op. cit.*, pp.143-151.
40. As in the case of the Lincoln College Typikon which shows the descendants of the original founders coming to the rescue of the house, Delehay, *op. cit.*, p.15.
41. C. Mango, 'Les monuments de l'architecture du XI siècle et leur signification historique et sociale', *TM*, 6 (1976), pp.351-64.
42. St. Athanasios related how the future Emperor, Nicephorus Phokas visited him on Mount Kyminas, cf. *Typikon hêtoi kanonikon tou hosiou kai theophoros patros hêmôn Athanasios tou en tō Athō*, in Meyer, *Haupturkunden*, pp.102-22, p.103.

43. See below, pp.122-3.
44. See P. Grierson, 'The Tombs and Obits of the Byzantine Emperors', *DOP*, 16 (1962), pp.3-60, with additional note by C. Mango and I. Ševčenko, *loc. cit.*, pp.61-3.
45. See S. Runciman, *Emperor Romanus Lecapenus and His Reign* (Cambridge, 1963).
46. Grierson, *op. cit.*, p.28-9; for the Monastery of the Myrelalon, see R. Janin, *Le géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin. I, Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique*, tome iii, *Les églises et les monastères* 2nd ed. (Paris, 1969), pp.364-6.
47. *Typikon of Pantokrator*. p.89.
48. The cemetery was dedicated to St. Nicholas, cf. Delehay; *op. cit.*, p.99. There is, however, no precise evidence as to the burial sites of these ladies.
49. *Le typicon du Monastère de Lips*, ed. Delehay, *op. cit.*, pp.106-40; Janin, *Eglises et monastères*, pp.307-310, T. Macridy, C. Mango, A.H.S. Megaw, E.J.W. Hawkins, 'The Monastery of Lips', (Fenari Isa Camii)', *DOP*, 18, (1964), pp.249-315.
50. See Michel Psellos, *Chronographie*, ed. E. Renauld, two vols. (Paris, 1926-8), II, pp.61-3. For the Monastery of St. George of the Mangana, see Janin, *op. cit.*, pp.70-6. For Skleraina, see, Seibt, *Die Skleroi*, pp.71 ff.
51. For the Argyroi, see J.-F. Vannier, *Familles byzantines, les Argyroi IX-XII siècles* (Paris, 1975), pp.20; 23. For the Gabrades: A.A.M. Bryer, 'A Byzantine Family; the Gabrades c.979-c.1653', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 12, (1969-70), pp.164-187; cf. p.181 [reprinted in A. Bryer, *The Empire of Trebizond and the Pontos* (London, 1980), III].
52. *Typikon de Grégoire Pacourianos*, pp.55-6. For the location of these properties, see C. Asdracha, *La région des Rhodopes aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles. Étude de géographie historique* (Athens, 1976), *passim*. and Lemerle, *Cinq Etudes*, pp.175-81.
53. *Typikon de Gregoire Pacourianos*, pp.44-45.
54. *Cartulary of the Greek Monastery of SS. Elias and Anastasius*, no. 13, pp.195-9.
55. *Loc. cit.*, p.194. L.R. Ménager, 'La Byzantinisation religieuse de l'Italie meridionale (IX-XII siècles) et la politique monastique des normands d'Italie', *Rev. Hist. Eccl.*, 53 (1958), pp.147-74; *liv* (1959), pp.5-40, cf. pp.31-2 [reprinted in L.R. Ménager, *Hommes et Institutions de l'Italie normande* (London, 1980), I].
56. *Loc. cit.*, p.195.

57. F. Trinchera, *Syllabus graecarum membranarum* (Naples, 1865), no.50 (1087). The document found its way into the Archive of the Monastery of Monte Cassino.
58. See F. Chalandon, *Histoire de la Domination Normande en Italie et en Sicile*, 2 vols. (rep. New York, 1960), cf. II, c.3 and 4, and E. Jamison, 'The Norman Administration of Apulia and Capua', *Papers of the British School at Rome* VI, no.6 (1913), pp.211-481, cf. pp.266; 302-6.
59. See G. der Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province de l'art byzantin: les églises rupestres de Cappadoce*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1925-42), I:2, pp.520-50; M. Restle, *Byzantine Wall Painting in Asia Minor*, 3 vols. (Shannon, 1969), I, p.135. S. Kostof, *Caves of God* (M.I.T., 1972), p.210, makes the connection with the campaign of 964. For Melias, see H. Grégoire, 'Notes épigraphiques VII; Mélias le Magister', *B*, 8 (1933), pp.79-88; P. Charanis, 'The Armenians in the Byzantine Empire' (Lisbon, 1963), pp.33; 44.
60. See above, p.115.
61. C. Mango and E.J.W. Hawkins, 'Report on Field Work in Istanbul and Cyprus', *DOP*, 27 (1964), pp.319-40, cf. pp.325-6.
62. A point succinctly made by C. Morrison, 'La dévaluation de la monnaie byzantine au XI siècle: Essai d'interprétation', *TM*, 6 (1976), pp.3-49, cf. p.16.
63. *Vitae SS. Johannis atque Euthymii*, ed. and trans. P. Peeters in *AB*, 36 (1917-19), p.23; N. Adontz, 'Tornik le moine', *B* 13 (1938), pp.143-64.
64. See R.P. Blake, 'Some Byzantine Accounting Practices Illustrated from Georgian Sources', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 51 (1940), pp.11-33.
65. D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth* (London 1971), discusses the importance of Athos as a centre of monastic excellence revered throughout the Empire and beyond.
66. Blake, *op. cit.*, *passim*.
67. *Typikon of Michael Attalaites*, *passim*. See Lemerle, *Cinq Études*, pp.106-8.
68. Lemerle, *loc. cit.*, pp.110-1.
69. *Typikon of Bačkov*, pp.36-7 for Pakourianos' lack of heirs. The figures are computed from the information in the *Typikon*.
70. *Actes de Lavra I*, no.32 (1057). The sum was 2,332 *nomismata*.
71. *Actes de Xénophon* (*Actes de l'Athos*, I), ed. L. Petit, *VV*, 10, (1903), *Prilozhenie*, I, no.1.

72. For some details of the later history of Bačkov, see Asdracha, *Région des Rhodopes*, pp.74-5.
73. This tendency is particularly surprising in the case of emperors who came to power by usurpation or *coup d'état*. But John Tzimiskes made grants to the Lavra on Athos, closely associated with his predecessor, Nicephorus Phokas, probably murdered by John himself (Lavra, no. 7 dated to 978, although an act of Basil II recalls the generosity of John Tzimiskes); Michael Doukas confirmed the chrysobulls of Romanos IV Diogenes for Chios (Zepos, *Ius I*, Appendix, Doc. XX, p.642); Attaleiates' foundations were granted chrysobulls by both Michael VII Doukas and the man who overthrew him, Nicephorus Botaneiates. (Gautier, 'Diataxis de Michel Attaleiate', pp.101-9; 109-23).
74. Delehay, 'Deux Typica byzantins', p.150.
75. cf. Epstein, 'Formulas for salvation', p.394.
76. See D.M. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos (Kantakouzenos) c.1100-1460* (*Dumbarton Oaks Studies*, XI, Cambridge, Mass. 1968), pp.92-5 for the monastic activity of John Kantakouzenos.
77. *loc. cit.*, p.29 See Trinchera, no.15 for an earlier example from S. Italy. The monk Nikon Touthlou and his son Ursos the *tourmarch* made a grant of the *kastellion* of *Petra Graeci* to Luke, *hêgoumenos* of the Monastery of St. Ananias and stipulated that "if one of our *genos* should become a monk in the aforesaid monastery, and he should stand out by words and deeds, let him be chosen *hêgoumenos*".
78. Delehay, 'Deux typica byzantin', p.170. St. Neophytos, founder of the Enkleistra Monastery near Paphos in Cyprus (1177), stipulated that his *Typikon* should be read twice yearly and that he himself should be the subject of daily remembrances, see Epstein, 'Formulas for Salvation', pp.381-3.
79. There is a considerable article literature on the question, but, as yet, no study which examines the whole problem of the relationship of lay protectors and their monastic interests. But the main arguments for the tenth and eleventh centuries are contained in H. Ahrweiler, 'Charistocratic et autres formes d'attribution de fondations, pieuses aux X-XI siècles', *ZRVI* 10 (1967), pp.1-27 [reprinted in H. Ahrweiler, *Études sur les structures administratives de Byzance* (London 1971)]; *id.*, 'La concession des droits incorporels. Donations conditionnelles'. *Actes du XII Congrès international d'Études byzantines*, II (Belgrade, 1964), pp.107-9; P. Lemerle, 'Un aspect du rôle des monastères à Byzance: les monastères donnés à des laïcs: les caractéristiques', *Académie des inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Comptes rendus des séances de l'année 1967, Jan.-Mars.*, pp.9-28 [reprinted in P. Lemerle, *Le monde de Byzance: Histoire et Institutions* (London, 1978), XV].
80. See Peira, XV, 16 in Zepos, *Ius*, IV, p.54.

81. The institution is often also referred to as kharistikarion, and appears in texts in both forms. A detailed study of the precise usage of these terms would be useful. See Ahrweiler, 'Charisticariat', p.1.
82. John of Antioch, Against the Kharistikarioi, ed. and trans. P. Gautier, in 'Réquisitoire du Patriarche Jean d'Antioche contre le charisticariat', REB, 33 (1967), pp.77-132; text: pp.91-131. cf. p.109.
83. G. Rhallês and M. Potlês, Syntagma tôn theiôn kai hierôn kanonôn, 6 vols. (Athens, 1852-9), ii. pp.21.
84. See Sathas, Mesaiônikê Bibliothêkê, V, no.29, pp.263-5.
85. Psellos intervened on behalf of the monastery of Homonoia in a boundary dispute (cf. Psellos, Scripta minora, I, no.60, pp.92-3) and defended the monastery of Megala Kellia in the theme of Opsikion against the jurisdiction of the thematic judge (*ibid.*, II, no.108, p.137; no.200, pp.227-9). In this respect, the role of the kharistikarios was very similar to that of the epitropos of a monastery, whose prime concern was surveillance over the landed assets of the house. St. Athanasios appointed two such figures: his friend John of Iberia, a monk on Athos, and a far more influential figure, the epi tou kanikleiou Nicephorus Ouranos, the official in charge of the authentication of imperial documents in red ink. For a further discussion of terminology, see R. Morris, 'Legal terminology in monastic documents of the tenth and eleventh centuries', in JÖB 32/2 (1981), pp.281-90 (= Akten des XVI. internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, II/2).
86. John of Antioch, op. cit., p.119.
87. Typikon of St. Mamas, ed. S. Eustratiades, "Typikon tês Monês tou hagiou megalomartyros Mamantos", in Hellenika, 1 (1928), pp.256-311, cf. p.257. For translation and discussion of this document, see Charanis, 'Monastic Properties', p.76.
88. Charanis, loc. cit.
89. Charanis, op. cit., p.80.
90. Rhallês-Potlês, ii, p.614.
91. J. Darrouzès, "Dossier sur le charisticariat" in Polychronion: Festschrift F. Dölger zum 75. Geburtstag, (Heidelberg, 1966), pp.150-165, no. 2, pp.157-8; 161-2; cf. p.153.
92. Ibid., no. 6, pp.160-1; 164-5; cf. p.154.
93. Zepos, Ius I coll. iv, Doc. xxxvii, pp.347-8.
94. cf. M. Angold, A Byzantine Government in Exile (Oxford, 1975), p.54.
95. For the position of katholikos kritês, see J. Darrouzès, Recherches sur les "offikia" de l'église byzantine (Paris, 1970), pp.116-17, 137, 138.
96. See Polemis, The Doukai p.103. The rights in question consisted of an adelphaton - a claim on the monastery for board and lodging - not quite the same as kharistikê!
97. E. Herman, "Die Regelung der Armut in den byzantinischen Klöstern", Orientalia Christiana Periodica, 7 (1941), pp.406-60, discusses the interesting question of the apotagê, the supposedly voluntary donation which was made by those entering a monastery and which, with detailed study, might give us some idea of the "entry fees" which were demanded by more prestigious houses.
98. The concern that the hegoumenate should be kept within the control of one family is evidence enough of one form of exclusivity.



CHAPTER 8 - COMNENIAN ARISTOCRATIC PALACE DECORATION:  
DESCRIPTIONS AND ISLAMIC CONNECTIONS

Lucy-Anne Hunt

In a recent survey of urban design in Byzantium, Professor Bouras pointed to the difficulty of differentiating middle Byzantine aristocratic houses from those of ordinary people, despite the aristocrats' luxurious manner of life.<sup>1</sup> While considerable evidence exists for Palaeologan aristocratic houses, there is less firm material for the middle Byzantine period. No agreement has been reached over the value of textual and other available sources. Krautheimer expressed scepticism: 'Representations in illuminated manuscripts of the period, lengthy descriptions, and passing hints in contemporary writings are all of doubtful value', although he retained the view that middle Byzantine palace types would be envisaged by considering Venetian palaces of the 11th-13th centuries, with their distinctive 'portico facade' feature.<sup>2</sup> But in turn, caution has been urged in accepting Venetian palaces as a prototype for lost middle Byzantine palaces, on the basis that Venetian examples may more directly reflect the survival of Roman palace plans in Italy.<sup>3</sup> Instead, Mango cited the observation of the contemporary chronicler Zonaras that during the reign of Alexius I, aristocrats 'made for themselves houses which, in point of size, resembled cities, and, in point of magnificence, were no different from royal palaces'.<sup>4</sup> Given the close social and economic ties between the nobility and the imperial family, a close dependence, even direct imitation of imperial palace design and decoration might be expected. This offers a point of departure for visualizing aristocratic palaces, bearing in mind the perennial problem that reconstructions of the complex of buildings that made up the Great Palace (and secondary imperial palaces too), are based almost exclusively on textual sources and supported by scant archaeological evidence.<sup>5</sup> Long ago Grabar defined the rôle of the imperial palace in propagating the iconography of imperial political ideology.<sup>6</sup> More recently, the basis for studying imperial art in the twelfth century has been clarified by the work of Magdalino on the building campaigns of Manuel I in the Great Palace, and by Magdalino and Nelson's study of imperial portraiture, which traces changing features in the imperial art of the period.<sup>7</sup> For the aristocratic palaces and their decoration, descriptions survive in various historical and literary works; but these can be assumed to reflect the reality only where monuments or other visual material survive to support them. The purpose of this contribution is to isolate one theme in descriptions of aristocratic palace design of the later twelfth century: the affinity with Islamic secular art. From this demonstration it is suggested that Islamic palaces of Syria, Mesopotamia and Seljuq Iran offer scope for discerning at least one style in later twelfth - and early thirteenth - century aristocratic palace building.

A starting point for isolating this strand in Byzantine aristocratic decoration is found in the well-known reference by Kinnamos in 1167 to the palace built by Alexius Axoukh, protostrator under Manuel I, who had two years earlier been appointed governor of Cilicia.<sup>8</sup> The description tells of how, on his return to Byzantium, he decorated one of his suburban palaces not with scenes of the Byzantine emperor's successes in war and hunting as was expected of 'men placed in authority', but with murals of the military campaigns of the Seljuq Sultan Kilidj Arslan II.<sup>9</sup> He is therefore censured by the writer for having laid himself open to suspicion by making such matters public. This brief comment on the interior decoration of Axoukh's palace juxtaposes the Byzantine palace norm with a specifically Seljuq element.

The norm then, was a cycle which both supported and propagated imperial ideology symbolically, reinforcing imperial authority in illustrating the moral, judicial and physical strength of its leadership. Such a cycle is epitomised in the decoration of Leo Sikountenos's house at Thessalonica, which, according to a description of 1174-5 (in MS Venice, Cod. Marc. gr. 524, fol. 22v) depicted personifications of the emperor's virtues. Next to exemplary actions by the Old Testament rulers Moses and Joshua, the artist 'has added those of the present time by painting alongside the soldiers of the heavenly King the crowned Emperor of the earth, the pillar of New Rome shining in the purple, Manuel, the descendant of the Comneni, slayer of alien peoples...' (Mango's translation).<sup>10</sup> Personifications of virtues are well established prior to the twelfth century both in the repertoire of imperial art and its wider 'secondary' settings. Enamel plaques from the crown of Constantine IX Monomachos, dated by its inscriptions between 1042-50, depict personifications of Truth and Humility (fig.1), which with courtly dancing girls once flanked the portraits of Constantine, his wife Zoe and sister-in-law Theodora.<sup>11</sup> It has been argued that the crown was an imperial gift by Constantine to a suzerain ruler, King Andrew of Hungary, or his queen; it differs from crowns worn by the emperor himself, which would not include imperial portraits. If so, it offers an instance of 'displaced' imperial iconography parallel to the decoration of aristocratic palaces in their semi-official, as opposed to private and domestic, function. Personifications of the virtues, Mercy and Justice, accompany John II Comnenus and his son Alexius being crowned by Christ in the dedication portrait in MS Vat. Urb. gr. 2 (fig.2) dateable between 1122-42.<sup>12</sup> This offers a point of departure for visualizing monumental imperial portraits in the Kouboukleion of the Blachernai palace and houses elsewhere, as Magdalino and Nelson indicate.<sup>13</sup>

A mural depicting four female figures representing the virtues of Prudence, Strength, Temperance and Justice is described in a palace garden, in the romance of Hysmine and Hysminias written by Eustathios Makrembolites in the mid-to-second half of the twelfth century. This may have been suggested to the writer by a mural he had actually seen in an aristocratic palace. While no exact architectural context for the painting, such as a garden pavilion, is given in the text, the painting itself is graphically described. The female personifications stand in a row, the first with a glittering jewelled crown, her hair plaited with gold thread, carrying an orb and wearing a rustic-style gown; the second wearing armour; the third

crowned with a flowering garland, her fine white tunic flying in the wind; and the fourth with a red tunic, carrying a measure and a torch.<sup>14</sup>

The second theme of Sikountênos's palace decoration, the deeds of Old Testament rulers, figures in another literary context, the palace decoration described in the Epic poem *Digenes Akrites* and interpreted by Grabar as associating the Emperor Manuel with the heroes of antiquity.<sup>15</sup> The scenes depicting the Emperor's military victories would have followed the model of Manuel's mosaic decoration in the 'long colonnaded halls' of both the Blachernai and the Great Palace, recording the list of his conquests.<sup>16</sup> Such scenes can be envisaged with the help of an ivory casket from Troyes, considered to date from the eleventh century, which shows mounted imperial figures either hunting or being presented with keys by personifications of the surrendered cities (fig.3).<sup>17</sup> Pieces of mosaic work in the great hall of the Torre Pisana in the royal palace at Palermo, are all that remain of a 12th century cycle of secular, possibly military, scenes. Fragments of horses, one with its rider, and a bowman survive on facing walls, with opposite, fragments of buildings and ornamental motifs. Possibly dating from the time of William I (1154-1166), these once formed part of a cycle of military or hunting scenes, or, although less likely, of a hippodrome scene as in the staircase tower paintings at St. Sophia, Kiev, but in a Norman Sicilian setting.<sup>18</sup> If indeed they presented the military scene of the ruler mounted and victorious, strongly influenced by Comnenian imperial art, such triumphal iconography may have remained more dominant in twelfth-century Byzantium than Magdalino and Nelson supposed.<sup>19</sup>

Alexius Axoukh's palace decoration, on the other hand, diverged from this norm, and introduces a Seljuq element into the discussion. The description can be interpreted in several ways. Perhaps it is simply to be dismissed as part of a smear campaign against Axoukh who was accused, rightly or wrongly, of conspiring with the Seljuq Kilidj Arslan, Sultan of Iconium, against Manuel in 1167, and was disgraced and dismissed from office. Alternatively, if the scenes really existed, they either endorse Axoukh's guilt or reflect a fashion for Seljuq forms of decoration, perhaps, as Magdalino suggested,<sup>20</sup> emanating from the Moukhroutas in the Great Palace. Since the weight of opinion contemporary and modern, seems to exonerate Axoukh, the last possibility deserves further consideration with an analysis of the points of contact between Byzantine and Islamic, especially Seljuq, secular art.<sup>21</sup>

A tradition of Islamic influence in Byzantine palace art long precedes the twelfth century. The suburban palace of Bryas built by the last iconoclast Emperor Theophilos between 831-2, of which the substructures (plan, fig.4) have been identified at Maltepe near Istanbul, was described by Theophilus Continuatus in terms of a conscious copy of 'Abbāsid palace design'.<sup>22</sup> The longitudinal axis of the plan, culminating in the throne room, compares with an 'Abbāsid palace such as Ukhaydir in Iraq, which in turn retains features of earlier, Umayyad, palaces like Mshattā in Syria (fig.5).<sup>23</sup> Islamic influence during the tenth and eleventh centuries extended to all spheres of art. In applied art, Grabar has traced the fashion throughout the Macedonian period for Islamic metalwork and portable objects.<sup>24</sup> The plaques of dancing girls on the crown of Monomachos

described above, reproduce a theme visible in the court painting of the 'Abbāsid palace at Samarra.<sup>25</sup> Islamic ornament and pseudo-Kufic lettering extended from precious objects,<sup>26</sup> such as the tenth-century bowl with mythological scenes in Venice,<sup>26</sup> to sculptural decoration of the façades of provincial and Constantinopolitan monuments.<sup>27</sup> Oriental-style tiles have been found in excavation of several Constantinopolitan buildings of the tenth and eleventh centuries.<sup>28</sup>

The Moukhroutas, built to the West of the main throne room in the Great Palace, is identified in Mesarites's description as being Persian in design. The description, contained in an account of the attempted usurpation of John Comnenus the Fat, son of Alexius Axoukh, in 1200, states that the building was erected during the lifetime of John's grandfather, a Seljuq Turk who served as Grand Domestic under both Emperors John II and Manuel I.<sup>29</sup> The consciously 'Persian' decoration of the building led Magdalino to suggest it was erected specifically for the visit of Kilidj Arslan II to Constantinople in 1161, the argument being not only the political importance of the visit and the lavishness of the preparations,<sup>30</sup> but the practical necessity of providing separate accommodation for the visiting Muslim, who might otherwise have 'contaminated' bathhouses and other buildings frequented by Christians, containing Christian images.<sup>31</sup> If correct this would mean the Moukhroutas preceded Alexius Axoukh's house by only four years, increasing the likelihood of direct influence.

Mesarites's description, starting with the exterior of the building, speaks for itself: 'The steps leading up to it are made of baked brick; lime and marble; the staircase which is serrated (?) on either side and turns in a circle, is coloured blue, deep red, green and purple by means of a medley of cut, painted tiles of cruciform shape. This building is the work of a Persian hand, by virtue of which it contains images of Persians in their different costumes. The canopy of the roof, consisting of hemispheres joined to the dome-like heaven, offers a variegated spectacle; closely packed angles project inward and outward. The beauty of the carving is extraordinary, and wonderful in the appearance of the cavities which, overlaid with gold, produce the effect of a rainbow, more colourful than the one in the clouds. There is insatiable enjoyment here, not hidden, but on the surface...'. It closes by mentioning John seated on the ground occupying the centre of this 'Persian stage ... acting agreeably to the Persians represented in the building and drinking their health' (Mango's translation). The centrally-planned building with its single conical-shaped dome (Makhrūt),<sup>32</sup> lavishly decorated inside, appears then to have been constructed on an upper level or terrace, connected with the lower by a pair of curved staircases, covered with coloured tiles. While a major centrally-planned Byzantine palace was built by Romanos Lekapenos in Constantinople in the 930s,<sup>33</sup> it is more probable that the Moukhroutas was a smaller 'kiosk' or pavilion building. Although its roofing is unknown, a kiosk of the Royal Palace at Konya (Iconium) built by Kilidj Arslan II in 1173-4 survived until the early years of this century (fig.9). A square structure 10m high, the kiosk had a balcony supported by projecting stalactite consoles, and was decorated with stucco-work and tiling, probably added in the thirteenth century by Ala ad-Din Kaikobad.<sup>34</sup>

Inside the Moukhroutas, the description centres on the ornamental decoration of the stalactite ceiling, with no mention of the lower wall space. The geometric shapes or mukarnas apparently formed a second shell, like the domes of the qibla wall of the Great Mosque of Marrakesh (Kutubiyya), dating between 1146-62 (fig.7).<sup>35</sup> The ceiling is further described as decorated with gold, scintillating like a rainbow, with figures of Persians enjoying themselves. This may be envisaged by analogy with the ceiling of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, built by Roger II to complement mosaic work in the church, and completed by 1143. Its painted decoration includes seated figures holding drinking vessels (fig.8) accompanied by dancers, singers, and scenes broadly interpreted to form part of an Islamic 'princely cycle'.<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately Mesarites does not elaborate on the decorative features, perhaps because their meaning was lost on him (Kinnamos may have misunderstood the Alexius Axoukh palace decoration in the same way); what seems to have impressed him was simply the richness of the whole as a piece of exotic, even decadent, orientalism.

While nothing is said of the façade or fenestration of the building, the description does specify the cruciform shape and the colours of the tiles lining the stairway. Suggestive of monumental thirteenth-century Seljuq tilework, these may be indicative either of restoration work closer to Mesarites's own time, or of his introducing an anachronistic feature into the description. The earliest cruciform tile dated by inscription is of 1203, in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, and decorated, like other Kāshān cruciform or star-shaped tiling of the first quarter of the thirteenth century, with a design of birds and leaves.<sup>37</sup> While no design is specified, the blue, deep red, green and purple of the Moukhroutas tiles are characteristic of polychrome lustre-painted ware of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, especially tiles of the early thirteenth century.<sup>38</sup> They are particularly reminiscent of tilework of the 1220s-30s bearing Seljuq royal symbols and in a variety of techniques - minai, lustre and overglazed ware -, found at Kubadabad (fig.11) and elsewhere, including the kiosk at Konya (fig.10).<sup>39</sup> The Moukhroutas is therefore recognizable in the context of twelfth - and early - thirteenth-century Islamic palace art. Its architecture and painted ceiling point to the mid-twelfth century, and it is not implausible to presume it was constructed for Kilidj Arslān II's visit to Constantinople in 1161. This, however, would relegate it to the status of a 'one-off' monument designed to impress a visiting Muslim dignitary, rather than an instance of the wider influence of Islamic art on the Byzantine court. Militating against such an interpretation is the dating of the building by Mesarites to the lifetime of John's grandfather, for this would give it a date before the latter's death in 1151.<sup>40</sup> The tilework, in contrast, suggests Seljuq work of the early thirteenth century, contemporary with the time of writing. This would appear to suggest that a taste for Seljuq art still existed in Constantinople at the beginning of the thirteenth century. To what extent, then, are the Seljuq features of the Moukhroutas and Axoukh's palace, unique?

The dual Byzantine-Seljuq milieu is epitomised in the Epic poem *Digenes Akrites*, set against the background of life on the Eastern border of the Empire during the ninth and tenth centuries, prior to the Seljuq advance. With the poem identified as a product of a

twelfth-century Constantinopolitan aristocratic and literary elite, it might be expected the description of Digenes's palace which appears in the second half, *The Digeneid*,<sup>41</sup> would reflect Islamic features. Oikonomidēs has pointed to the 'abstract' nature of the political and geographical setting of the poem, terming it 'un roman aristocratique, sinon féodale', in which, from a twelfth-century vantage, Christian-Muslim coalescence could be asserted at a comfortable chronological distance.<sup>42</sup> The poem has been linked to the fashionable twelfth-century genre of Hellenistic-inspired Romances, and its popularity is further demonstrated, in visual terms, by a series of ceramic plates and metal vessels of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>43</sup> Yet while there is no denying the overwhelming mass of accurate or half-accurate political and historical detail woven into the poem's narrative structure,<sup>44</sup> exact topographical and archaeological references have proved difficult to establish. Jeffreys's attribution<sup>45</sup> to an oral tradition of the more descriptive, 'literary' and loosely-structured *Digeneid*, as against the earlier 'Lay of the Emir', offers scope for identifying certain landmarks. Grégoire's identification of the tomb of Digenes (in the Grottaferrata text) with the monument to the kings of Commagene at Sesōnk, accords with the predilection of Manuel I, the 'new Akrites', for conferring upon himself an ancient kingly ancestry.<sup>46</sup> So while the palace description signifies an aristocratic palace on the Euphrates to a Comnenian readership in Constantinople, this was a sophisticated readership sensitive to topographical and archaeological details of the area of Commagene eastwards.

The description of the palace consists of three parts: the garden, the architecture of the complex and its decoration. It may be examined in the Grottaferrata version of the poem and compared with other versions.<sup>47</sup> While the description of the garden is an ekphrasis based on Achilles Tatius,<sup>48</sup> that of the architecture offers scope for visualizing an actual aristocratic palace. An outer wall faced with marble plaques encloses the various elements of the palace complex. These are: first, an entrance gateway and a square colonnaded building of three storeys, faced with ashlar masonry and with upper windows; and behind, a second building. Next, a high tower with a staircase and balconies, two porticoes with mosaic work; and, in addition, a church, a bath, and a guesthouse nearby. Professor Xyngopoulos used these elements in an attempt to reconstruct the plan of the palace. It showed a central courtyard, around which were arranged the two larger blocks linked by two porticoed ways. To support his reconstruction, he was able to advance parallels with palaces in Syria and northern Mesopotamia.<sup>49</sup>

It is helpful to view the palace of Digenes as a rural villa, not unlike those of eighth-century Syria, with the difference that it has three storeys in place of two, and some anachronistic features. The scheme of a main block with a second building behind suggests an axial arrangement as at Mshattā (fig.5), where the compound (which is over 130 metres square - double the size of other Umayyad palaces) is entered through a main gate ornamented with carving, which leads into the central courtyard. Beyond this is the group of chambers enclosing the triconch throne room.<sup>50</sup> While the lateral rooms or secondary structures were never completed at Mshattā, residential buildings, a mosque and bath buildings can be imagined from Hisham's palace of Khirbet al-Mafdjār where, however, they are haphazardly arranged

(fig.6).<sup>51</sup> Access from the entrance on the south east side gives onto a courtyard with fountain, beyond which, to the north, is a secondary court surrounded by residential buildings, with a small mosque on its south wing. A second, larger mosque to the north leads via a closed courtyard to the extravagantly decorated bath complex, with a tower beyond. Outside the enclosure to the west of the bath hall is a small building, probably a guest-house as it looks too small to be a caravanserai.<sup>52</sup> Thus a topographical reference to the Euphrates is established for the architecture of Digenes's palace, altered to suit the Christian context. A church dedicated to St. Theodore housing the tomb of Digenes's father, is specified for the courtyard. This is reminiscent of the church dedicated to the Virgin in the courtyard of Theophilos's palace of Bryas which, with a chapel next to the bedchamber, was the only departure from the Arab plan.<sup>53</sup> The dedication to St. Theodore is appropriate to the frontier region and there are precedents for it: the military saint appears amongst the sculptures of the tenth century church of the Holy Cross at Aghtamar,<sup>54</sup> and an icon of St. Theodore is included in the will of Eustathios Boilas, a provincial magnate of the late eleventh century who built himself a house on the eastern frontier - and whose library incidentally, possessed a copy of Achilles Tatius.<sup>55</sup> A contemporary, Seljuq feature is introduced with the tower, described in the Trebizond MS version as square at the base and octagonal above, with a staircase and balconies, and a cruciform chamber in its upper storey. This may be compared with the former square kiosk palace building at Konya (fig.9) with its balconies and upper chambers, as Xyngopoulos realised.<sup>56</sup> The upper chamber described is surely a triconch chamber as at Mshattā. Finally, the marble plaques cladding the enclosure wall are more suggestive of middle Byzantine architectural decoration than of Umayyad.<sup>57</sup>

The interior ceiling decoration is described as of mosaic, with floors of marble and onyx. The 'wonderous reclining rooms' of the porticoed wings had golden mosaic ceilings bearing scenes of Old Testament heroes - Samson, David, Moses and Joshua - with the mythological stories of Achilles, Agamemnon, Penelope, Bellerophon slaying the Chimera, and Odysseus, and with the historical story of Alexander. Grabar adduced comparative material from middle Byzantine manuscripts and ivories for individual scenes, which he regarded as part of an entire palace cycle of imperial propaganda (i.e. 'the norm'), where actions of the Christian emperor are anticipated by those of Old Testament heroes.<sup>58</sup> There is no shortage of visual parallels celebrating the military feats of emperors in an Old Testament idiom and identifying particular campaigns with Biblical events: the seventh-century silver David plates are associated with Heraclius<sup>59</sup> and the Joshua Roll with the military campaigns of Nicephorus Phokas and John Tzimiskes on the eastern border.<sup>60</sup> Islamic-style ornamental sculpture of the Panaghia church of Hosios Lukas, recently interpreted as a reference to the saint's prediction of Romanos II's victory over the Arabs, is accompanied by a wallpainting of Joshua in the Catholicon.<sup>61</sup> A roundel depicting Samson slaying Philistines forms one of a cycle of Samson scenes in the opus sectile floor of the South church of the Pantokrator monastery founded by John II in 1136 (fig.12).<sup>62</sup> However, 'propaganda' is perhaps too general a category to explain the persistent combination of Islamic motifs and mythological themes. Cutler attributed the presence of both mythological figures and pseudo-Kufic ornament on the glass bowl in

Venice, to the 'eclecticism' of the court of the Macedonian Emperors in the tenth century, with their 'catholic, if uncritical taste'.<sup>63</sup> But since this eclecticism continues into the twelfth century, it is tempting to advance a more conscious motive. Also attributed to a courtly aristocratic milieu is the Veroli casket, whose mythological and sexual imagery based on scenes from Euripides and Nonnos, has been associated with an aristocratic family of Constantinople c.1000.<sup>64</sup> The profane, even erotic overtones of the iconography are consistent with romance literature, and imply an overlap between twelfth-century artistic and literary themes. The naked putti of the Veroli casket, for example, evoke the wallpainting of Eros described by Makrembolites in the palace garden of Hysmine and Hysminias.<sup>65</sup> This suggests an expression of aristocratic romance taste beyond the dictates of the traditional imperial cycle. It has passed unnoticed that imperial portraits and scenes of war and hunting, are absent from the Digenes palace description. It might be argued that such an omission may be symptomatic of the 'abstract' quality of the poem, in its avoidance of direct reference to a particular Emperor and its reliance on existing scenes for a 'shorthand' imperial cycle. On the other hand, the panel of the top of the Troyes casket (fig.3) offers one such instance of the timeless depiction of military and hunting scenes, with its cavaliers resembling emperors, so it appears these were deliberately omitted from the description of Digenes's palace. The decoration of Digenes's palace, therefore, may reveal as much about aristocratic concerns as imperial ideology.

As in the text as a whole, the 'literary' does not cancel out the 'real': similarities of the mosaic cycle with other Comnenian descriptions do not reduce the cycle to the level of a purely literary interpolation.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, while the narrative of the Alexander scenes is based on the text of Pseudo-Callisthenes's *Romance of Alexander*, the writer might also have held courtly pictorial iconography in mind.<sup>67</sup> The Ascension of Alexander (fig.13) forms the centrepiece of an enamel plate now in Innsbruck, associated by its Arabic inscription with Da'ud Ibn Suqman, Artuqid ruler of Diyarbakr between 1114-44. Although no consensus has been reached as to the plate's origination, Oleg Grabar has drawn attention to inventories of gifts from the Byzantine court which may offer a solution.<sup>68</sup> Like the Digenes description, it may represent a Byzantine interpretation of Islamic palace art.

The Digenes palace description, then, offers a composite drawn from real palaces in Eastern Asia Minor, Syria and Mesopotamia, both Umayyad and Seljuq. In using it to envisage the architecture and decoration of a twelfth-century Byzantine aristocratic palace, it is well to consider how it would have been received by its Constantinopolitan readership. Littlewood has remarked on the element of 'escapism' in twelfth-century romance literature.<sup>69</sup> The Digenes palace description may in turn have provided an epitome of an oriental palace, at a time when aspects of Seljuq palace art was being adopted in Constantinople itself.

The 'fashion' for Seljuq palace art was sustained elsewhere into the early thirteenth century, beyond the immediate imperial court circle of Constantinople. The alteration undertaken to the bishop's palace at Naupaktos in 1220 by Constantine Doukas, ruler of the southern part of the Despotate, on behalf of his brother



Theodore, is a further indication of Seljuq influence on aristocratic palace building.<sup>70</sup> In the course of an argument over payment of taxes, Constantine ejected the Metropolitan Apokaukos, seized the episcopal palace and appropriated the monastery for his own ends. Apokaukos's description of the building work mentions a 'soufa', an Arabic word for a shelter.<sup>71</sup> He proceeds to describe this as a rectangular extension added onto the main building, having a raised dining area at one end for the governor, divided off by latticework screens. Latticework was a feature of the palace and church of the so-called 'House of Botaneitantes' in Constantinople.<sup>72</sup> Wooden window screens survive from Mamlūk Egypt and Syria, while latticework is a standard feature in pictures of secular monuments in illustrated manuscripts,<sup>73</sup> both Greek and Arab, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Whilst Crusader and not Byzantine, the description of the palace of John I of Ibelin at Beirut, written by William of Oldenburg in 1211,<sup>74</sup> is evocative of a similar palace milieu, and introduces the contemporary courts of Syria and northern Mesopotamia as points of contact. According to William's account, the palace is located in one of the fortified towers of the city, facing the sea. Sea imagery is extended to the decoration of what must have been the main hall where the marblework of the pavement is compared with wind-blow water, presumably forming curved shapes. The walls are faced with marble slabs simulating curtains. The vaulted ceiling is painted sky-blue, with clouds, a blowing Zephyrus, and the sun passing through time depicted as the zodiac. William further reports that Syrian, Arab, and Greek craftsmen cooperated in the decoration, vying with one another in the practice of their own specialities. The focal point of the palace is an elaborate fountain. Its base is made of smooth, multi-coloured marbles, arranged to form a pattern of innumerable flowers. At the apex a dragon spouts water, with other animals below. William found the sound of the fountain relaxing and would have been happy to spend the rest of his days near it.

The decoration in its entirety was presumably planned as a cosmological system or cycle, with zodiac signs and planets painted on the ceiling with the pseudo-planet, the dragon Jawzahr, mounted on the top of the fountain. Cosmological cycles were common in Islamic art from the twelfth century, especially (but clearly not exclusively) in metalwork.<sup>75</sup> In other respects the decoration is evocative of twelfth - and thirteenth-century 'courtly' art in a wide sense. The curving patterns of the pavement are reminiscent of similar patterns, but in mosaic work, which adorned the base of a fountain in the (probably domed) cruciform hall at the Seljuq palace of Diyārbakr (Āmid) (fig.14).<sup>76</sup> This mosaic work can be related to that of mid-to-late twelfth-century monuments in Damascus, as Aslanapa has pointed out.<sup>77</sup> A comparable description to that of the Beirut fountain, but in a court of a Byzantine aristocratic palace garden, is supplied by Makrembolites in the romance *Hysmine and Hysminias*, which reads like an improbable joke but for a near-contemporary visual parallel. This fountain features several bronze sculptures spouting water; an eagle with wings outspread on a column in the centre, surmounts the basin encircled by birds and animals, including a nanny goat with young being milked by a milkmaid.<sup>78</sup> Even so bizarre a contraption as this would not have seemed out of place at the court of the Artukid Sultan Nasr ad-Din Mahmūd, whose

ascination with mechanical devices, itself inspired by Greek scientific treatises, led him in 1181-2 to commission from al-Jazari a treatise, the *Book of the Knowledge of Mechanical Devices*. The earliest surviving manuscript, that of 1206 in Istanbul (Topkapu Sarayı Müzesi Ahmet III 3472) puts these descriptions into perspective with its illustration of a fountain, this time surmounted by a peacock (fig.15).<sup>80</sup> Another illustration in the same manuscript evokes the scheme of the painted ceiling at Beirut with the signs of the zodiac arranged in a circle against a sky-blue background, the sun and moon in the centre.<sup>81</sup> These descriptions of the late twelfth to early thirteenth centuries, together with surviving court art of the period, all suggest that Christian and Muslim courts shared similar artistic tastes and interests. They also point to the strong possibility that Greek and Arab craftsmen were to be found working side by side.

The 'norm' of Byzantine aristocratic palace decoration in the twelfth century has here been set alongside the 'Islamic' element which represents, however, as much of a continuous theme throughout the Comnenian and Angeloi periods, as does the former. While Islamic decorative motifs had been popular since the ninth century in Byzantine architecture, sculpture and the applied arts, their significance has proved difficult to define except in the general context of a victorious iconography, or the eclectic connoisseurship of the aristocrats and the ruling family. The frequency of references to Islamic influence in the twelfth century, suggests that Islamic court art possessed a coherence and a symbolism which the Byzantines, like the Norman kings of Sicily, consciously adopted. The Moukhroutas provides an exemplary instance of the imperial adoption of Islamic courtly themes. If, as argued here, it predates the visit of Kilidj Arslan to Constantinople, it is indicative of the adoption by the Byzantine court of Islamic court art during the 1140s, contemporary with the employment by Roger II of Arab artists at Palermo. This phenomenon was evidently sustained throughout the second half of the twelfth century and into the early years of the thirteenth. Literary descriptions, illuminated by surviving visual material, argue not only a parallelism of Byzantine, Arab and Crusader court art, but also the widespread adoption by the aristocracy of such courtly themes. The popularity of romance literature at the time may be no coincidence. The aristocracy may even have promoted the spread of Islamic courtly art with such distilled models as the fictional palace of Digenes Akrites. After the later eleventh century, the influx of Anatolians into Constantinople must have strengthened the curiosity and affinity with Islamic styles of architecture and decoration. Finally, the strong possibility exists that it is Islamic and not Venetian palaces that present the most evocative objects of study for an understanding of middle Byzantine palaces.



# NOTES

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4. Zonaras, (Bonn) p.767; trans. Mango Architecture, p.235. 'Veneto-Byzantine' palaces are described most recently by E. Arslan, Gothic Architecture in Venice (New York 1971), pp.15ff, and D. Howard, The Architecture of Venice (Oxford 1980), pp.35ff.
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7. P. Magdalino, 'Manuel Komnenos and the Great Palace', BMGS 4 (1978), pp.101-14; P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, 'The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the Twelfth Century', Byzantinische Forschungen 7 (1982), pp.123-82.
8. F. Chalandon, Les Comnènes: Études sur l'Empire Byzantin au XIe et au XIIe siècles (Paris 1900-12 rpt. New York n.d.), II(2) p.655, R. Guiliand, 'Etudes de titulature et de prosopographie: Le protostrator', REB 7 (1950) pp.160-1.
9. Cinnamus (Bonn) VI, pp.266ff; trans. C. Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453 (Sources and Documents in the History of Art) (Englewood Cliffs NJ 1972), pp.224-5; and C.M. Brand, Deeds of Manuel Comnenus by John Kinnamos (New York 1976), pp.199-200.
10. ed. S. Lampros, Neos Hellēnomnēmōn Athens 1910; trans. Mango, Sources, pp.225-6.
11. M. Bárány-Oberschall, 'The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos', Archaeologica Hungarica 22, Budapest 1937, pp.49ff J. Deér, Die heilige krone Ungarns Vienna 1966 pp.139ff with earlier literature. The decoration of a perfume burner, now in

Venice, from the Macedonian court shaped like a palace kiosk, includes personifications of Courage and Intelligence; see A. Grabar, 'Le Succès des arts orientaux à la cour Byzantine sous les Macédoniens', in idem, L'Art de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age (Paris 1968), pp.282ff, pl.61a.

12. I. Spatharakis, The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts (Leiden 1976), pp.78ff, with earlier bibliography and fig.46 (reproduced here as fig.2); J. Anderson, An Examination of Two Twelfth Century Centers of Byzantine Manuscript Production, Princeton Univ. Ph.D. thesis, Univ. Microfilms, Ann Arbor 1976, Vol.I, pp.21ff; Magdalino and Nelson, 'Twelfth Century', esp. pp.142ff.
13. Magdalino and Nelson, 'Twelfth Century' p.145, suggest the dome of the Cappella Palatina, with Christ Pantocrator surrounded by a 'retinue' of angels and archangels as a possible arrangement for the kouboukleion image of the Emperor as the incarnation of virtues.
14. R. Hercher, Erotici Scriptores Graeci, II, Leipsig 1859, pp.170ff; Magdalino and Nelson, 'Twelfth Century' p.143 n.43; M. Alexiou, 'A Critical Reappraisal of Eustathius Makrembolites' "Hysmine and Hysminias"', BMGS 3 (1977), pp.23ff. I am grateful to Dr. John Haldon for advice with the translation of this and other Greek texts.
15. Below, note 58.
16. Niketas Choniates (Bonn) p.269, trans. Mango, Sources, p.224, (and see pp.225, 227-8 for other military scenes); Magdalino, 'Manuel Komnenos', pp.101-2, points out the derivation from Justinian's Chalke.
17. A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X-XIII Jahrhunderts, 2nd. ed. (Berlin 1979), I, p.63 no.122, pl.LIX; Grabar, L'empereur, pp.50-1, pl.X 1-2.
18. E. Kitzinger, 'The Mosaic Fragments in the Torre Pisana of the Royal Palace in Palermo: A Preliminary Study', to be published in the Festschrift for Henri Stern, which Prof. Kitzinger kindly showed me in typescript. For the comparison with Kiev see A. Grabar, 'L'art profane en Russie pré-mongole et le dit d'Igor', rept. in idem, L'Art de la fin de l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age pp.310-11.
19. Magdalino and Nelson, 'Twelfth Century', pp.155ff.
20. Magdalino, 'Manuel Komnenos', pp.108-9.
21. Chalandon, Les Comnènes II(1), pp.219-20. 228, II(2), p.488 with sources, including Niketas Choniates who was sympathetic to Alexius.
22. S. Eyice, 'Un palais byzantin construit d'après les plans des palais abbassides: le palais de Bryas', Belletín 23 (1959), pp.101-4; S. Eyice, 'Quatre edifices inédits ou mal connus',

- Cahiers Archéologiques 10 (1959), pp.245-8; Mango, Sources p.160; idem, Architecture p.194 (Pl. 217 reproduced here as fig.4).
23. O. Grabar, 'al-Mushatta, Baghdād and Wāsit', Studies in Honor of P.K. Hitti (London/New York 1960), pp.99-108.
  24. Grabar, 'Le Succès des arts orientaux', pp.265ff. Themes common to Muslim and Christian rulers in the Macedonian period are surveyed by O. and A. Grabar, 'L'Essor des arts inspirés par les cours princières à la fin du premier millénaire', in O. Grabar, Studies in Medieval Islamic Art, London 1976, no.VIII, pp.845-92.
  25. See above, n.11; R. Ettinghausen, 'Painting in the Fatimid Period: A Reconstruction', Ars Islamica 9 (1942), pp.115-6; Deér, Die heilige Krone Ungarns, p.141.
  26. A. Cutler, 'The Mythological Bowl in the Treasury of San Marco at Venice', ed. D.K. Koumijian, Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History : Studies in Honour of George C. Miles, (Beirut 1974), pp. 235ff.
  27. A.H.S. Megaw, 'Byzantine Reticulate Revetments', Kharistêrion eis A.K. Orlandon III (Athens 1966), pp.10ff; R. Ettinghausen, 'Kufesque in Byzantine Greece, the Latin West and the Muslim World', A Colloquium in Memory of G.C. Miles, The American Numismatic Society (New York 1976), pp.28ff; Mango, Architecture pp.198ff. with further bibliography.
  28. E.S. Ettinghausen, 'Byzantine tiles from the basilica in the Topkapı Sarayı and Saint John of Studios', Cahiers Archéologiques, 7 (1954), pp.79-88. The list includes one secular building.
  29. A. Heisenberg, Nikolas Mesarites, Die Palastrevolution des Johannes Komnenos (Würzburg, 1907), pp.44-5; trans. Mango, Sources pp.228-9; Magdalino, 'Manuel Komnenos' pp.102ff.
  30. Chalandon, Les Comnènes II(2), pp.462ff.
  31. Cinnamus (Bonn), pp.204ff (trans. Brand, Deeds, p.157), records that the Sultan had a special residence assigned to him in the Great Palace, and that the Patriarch refused to allow the Sultan into St. Sophia for a procession, as this would be sacrilege. George Pachymeres I, pp.258-9, records that a similar charge was brought against Patriarch Arsenius in the mid-13th century, as he had permitted the visiting Sultan Izz ad-Din to use the bath of the Great Church, despite the sign of the cross engraved in marble, to which the Patriarch protested that the Sultan would then have to be banned from every bath in the city, as they all had crosses and even icons. I am grateful to Paul Magdalino for these references.
  32. E.W. Lane, An Arabic-English Dictionary pt.2 (rpt. Beirut 1980), p.724.
  33. R. Naumann, 'Der antike Rundbau beim Myrelaion und der Palast Romanos I Lekapenos', Istanbuler Mitteilungen 16 (1966) pp.196ff, esp.206-8, relates the plan to late 5th century buildings.
  34. F. Sarre, Der Kiosk von Konia, Berlin 1936; K. Otto-Dorn, Türkische Keramik, Ankara 1957, pp.31ff; O. Aslanapa, Turkish Art and Architecture (London 1971), p.162; ed. E. Akurgal, Art and Architecture of Turkey (Oxford 1980), pp.94ff.
  35. eds. J. Sourdel-Thomine and B. Spuler, Die Kunst des Islam, Propyläen Kunstgeschichte, Bd.4 (Berlin 1973), pp.284-5 and Abb.228, reproduced here as fig.9. D. Jones, 'The Cappella Palatina in Palermo: Problems of Attribution', Art and Archeology Research Papers 2 (1972), p.45, attempts to argue the North African origin of the Cappella Palatina ceiling.
  36. U. Monneret de Villard, Le pittura musulmane al soffitto della Cappella Palatina in Palermo (Rome 1950), pp.37ff. (fig.184 reproduced here as fig.8) isolated the courtly cycle as one amongst several themes of the ceiling's decoration. A similar wide interpretation embraces figural scenes on Fāṭimid ceramics; O. Grabar, 'Imperial and Urban Art in Islam: The Subject Matter of Fatimid Art', rept. in idem, Studies in Medieval Islamic Art, no. VII, pp.21ff.
  37. M. Bahrāmī, Recherches sur les carreaux de revêtement lustré dans la céramique Persane (Paris 1937), p.59, fig.24; A.U. Pope, A Survey of Persian Art (London and New York 1939), Vol. II, pp.1573ff and plates, 1668, 1675ff.
  38. Pope, Survey II, pp.1556ff and plates.
  39. Respectively, K. Otto-Dorn and M. Önder, 'Bericht über die Grabung in Kobadabad (Oktober 1965)', Archäologische Anzeiger 81 (1966), pp.174ff and plates (of which Abb. 8 reproduced here as fig.11 Sarre, Kiosk von Konia, pp.14ff; Otto-Dorn, Türkische Keramik, pp.31ff.
  40. R. Guillard, 'Le Grand Domesticat à Byzance', Échos d'Orient, 37 (1938), p.71 n.8.
  41. Versions of the palace description are collated and discussed by A. Xyngopoulos, 'To Anaktorion tou Digenē Akrita', Laographia 12 (1938-48), pp.548ff; Grottaferrata version (Book VIII, 11.1ff) ed. and trans. J. Mavrogordato, Digenes Akrites (Oxford 1956), pp.216ff and, minus the garden ekphrasis, Mango, Sources pp.215-6; ed. E. Trapp, Digenes Akrites: Synoptische Ausgabe der ältesten Versionen (Vienna 1971), pp.66-7. For the text as a whole, H-G.Beck Geschichte der Byzantinischen Volksliteratur (Munich 1971), pp.63ff with earlier literature.
  42. N. Oikonomidēs, 'L'Épopée "de Digenis et la frontière orientale de Byzance aux X<sup>e</sup> et XI<sup>e</sup> siècles', TM 7 (1979), pp.377ff, esp. 395-7.

43. On the romance literature, see H. Hunger, Die Hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantinen II (Munich 1978), pp.119ff. A. Franz, 'Digenes Akritas: A Byzantine Epic and its Illustrators', B 15 (1940), pp.87-91; V.P. Darkevitch, Byzantine Secular Art in the 12th and 13th Centuries (Moscow 1975), summary in English pp.321ff and plates.
44. G. Huxley, 'Antecedents and Context of Digenes Akrites', Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies, 15 (1974), pp.317-38; Oikonomides, 'Frontière orientale' with earlier literature.
45. M.J. Jeffreys, 'Digenis Akritas and Kommagene', Svenska Forskningsinstitutet i Istanbul Meddelanden, 3 (1978), p.28. See also the views of R. Beaton, 'Digenes Akrites' and Modern Greek Folk Song: A Reassessment', B 51 (1981), pp.22ff, and 'Was Digenes Akrites an Oral Poem?', BMGS 7 (1982), pp.7ff.
46. H. Grégoire, 'Le tombeau et le date de Digenis Akritas', B 6 (1931), pp.499ff; Jeffreys, 'Digenes Akrites', pp.22ff.
47. Above, n.41.
48. O. Schissel, Der Byzantinische Garten: Seine Darstellung im gleichzeitigen Romane (Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien, Sitz. Phil-Hist. Kl. 22), Vienna 1943, pp.10ff. The erotic symbolism of Romance literature garden descriptions is discussed by A.R. Littlewood, 'Romantic Paradises: The Rôle of the Garden in the Byzantine Romance', BMGS 5 (1979), pp.95ff. A 'real' garden on the Euphrates would be more of an agricultural enclosure, like that of the Umayyad palace of Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi - see D. Schlumberger, 'les fouilles de Qasr el-Heir al-Gharbi 1936-1938', Syria XX (1939), pp.195ff.
49. Xyngopoulos, 'To Anaktoron tou Digenê Akrita', pp.557ff, reconstructed plan, p.570.
50. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture: Umayyads AD 622-720 I (Oxford 1932), pp.350ff, plan fig.430 reproduced here as fig.5.
51. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, pp.574, 576; R.W. Hamilton, Khirbet al Mafjar (Oxford 1959), plan pl.CIX reproduced here as fig.6. R. Hillenbrand, 'La Dolce Vita in Early Islamic Syria: Evidence of later Umayyad Palaces', Art History, 5 (1) (March 1982), pp.5-6 speculates about a possible bath building near Mshattâ, outside the symmetrically organised enclosure. I. Lavin, 'The House of the Lord', Art Bulletin, 44 pp.1ff, discusses the Roman imperial antecedents and connotations of the triconch throne room plan. Sixth-century Christian buildings with triconch audience chambers precede Mshattâ in Syria, especially the episcopal palace at Bosra (512) and Qasr Ibn Wardan - see Mango, Byzantine Architecture, p.151, figs.154ff.
52. O. Grabar, R. Holod, J. Knustad, W. Troudale, City in the Desert: Qasr al-Hayr East (Cambridge, Mass.), 1978, pp.29ff, suggest the small enclosure at Qasr al-Hayr East (itself c.70m

square) served as a caravanserai, and suggest the same function, as trading post, for other buildings in Syria.

53. Mango, Sources, p.160.
54. A.A.M. Bryer, 'Achthamar and Digenis Akrites', Antiquity, 34 (1960), p.296; S. Der Nersessian, Agthamar: Church of the Holy Cross (Cambridge, Mass.), 1965, p.19, figs.49-50; K. Otto-Dorn, 'Türkisch-Islamisches Bildgut in den figurenreliefs von Achthamar', Anatolia, 6 (1961/2), pp.1-69, argues the direct influence of Islamic courtly art on the sculpted frieze of Aghthamar.
55. S. Vryonis, 'The will of a provincial magnate Eustathius Boilas (1059)', DOP 11 (1957), pp.268-9.
56. Xyngopoulos, 'To Anaktoron tou Digenê Akrita', pp.562ff. For other square Seljuq palace kiosks, especially at Keykubâdiye, see O. Aslanapa, 'Kayseride Keykubadiye Köşkleri Kazısı (1964)' Türk Arkeoloji Dergisi, 13 (I) (1964) pp.19ff and idem, Turkish Art and Architecture pp.162ff.
57. Grabar, 'L'Art profane en Russie pré-Mongole', pp.316ff, pointed to the survival from the Comnenian period of twelfth-century relief sculpture with secular scenes facing Kievan churches, comparable with those of San Marco in Venice.
58. Grabar, 'L'empereur', pp.93-7; idem, 'L'Art profane en Russie Pré-Mongole', pp.327ff.
59. E. Kitzinger has argued that the archaic classical style of the plates endorsed traditional imperial standards and beliefs, a view summarised in his Byzantine Art in the Making (Cambridge, Mass. 1977), pp.110ff. For the parallel in contemporary court poetry, see J. Trilling, 'Myth and Metaphor at the Byzantine Court: A Literary Approach to the David Plates', B 48 (1978), pp.249-63.
60. MS Bibl. Vat. Pal. gr. 431: K. Weitzmann, The Joshua Roll (Princeton 1948); M. Shapiro, 'The Place of the Joshua Roll in Byzantine History', Gazette des Beaux Arts, ser.6, 35 (1949), esp. pp.168ff.
61. L. Bouras, Glyptos Diakosmos tou naou tês Panagias sto monastêri tou Hosiou Louka (Athens 1980), pp.126ff. For the wall-painting of Joshua, E.G. Stikas, To Oikodomikon Khronikon tês Monês Hosiou Louka Phôkidos (Athens 1970), pp.174ff and plates.
62. A.H.S. Megaw, 'Notes on Recent Work of the Byzantine Institute in Istanbul', DOP 17 (1963), pp.335ff (fig.5 reproduced here as fig.12); T.F. Mathews, The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul: A Photographic Survey (Penn State Univ. & London 1976), pp.71ff.
63. Cutler, 'Mythological Bowl', p.254.
64. E. Simon, 'Nonnos und das Elfenbeinkästchen aus Veroli', Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts 79 (1964), pp.279-

336. The problem remains as to why the casket was made - Simon suggests a wedding casket. Also, J. Beckwith, The Veroli Casket, London 1962; Goldschmidt and Weitzmann, Elfenbeinskulpturen, pp.30ff, no. 21a-g taf. IX, X. K. Weitzmann, 'The Survival of Mythological Representations in Early Christian and Byzantine Art and their Impact on Christian Iconography', rept. in idem, Classical Heritage in Byzantine and Near Eastern Art (London 1981), no. VI, p.68, concludes that in art 'The classical realm remained the concern of a small class of intellectuals having a humanistic outlook.'
65. Hercher, Scriptores Erotici Graeci, pp.174ff; Alexiou, 'Critical Reappraisal of Eustathius Makrembolites' "Hysmine and Hysminias"', p.33.
66. M. Andronikou, 'To Palati tou Digenê Akrita', Epistêmonikê Epetêris, Salonika 1970, pp.7-15, regards the palace description as a whole as pure ekphrasis based on antique models; Xyngopoulos, 'To Anaktoron tou Digenê Akrita', pp.571ff, argued the mosaic cycle to be a symbolical compilation of various literary sources.
67. Middle Byzantine imperial connotations of Alexander iconography in monumental sculpture and metalwork, are pointed out by A. Grabar, 'Images de l'Ascension d'Alexandre en Italie et en Russie', rept. in idem, l'Art de la fin l'Antiquité et du Moyen Age, pp.291ff.
68. M. van Berchem and J. Strzygowski, Amida (Heidelberg 1910), pp.120-8; H. Buchthal, 'A Note on Islamic Enamelled Metalwork and its influence on the Latin West', rept. with updating postscript in Art of the Mediterranean World AD 100-1400 (Washington DC 1983), pp.32-5; J.M. Rogers, in Sourdèl-Thomine and Spuler, Kunst des Islam, pp.303-4, pl. XLII (reproduced here as fig.13); O. Grabar, 'Subject matter of Fatimid Art', p.43. The comparison has been made frequently between the plate and the enamels of the crown of Constantine Monomachos, especially the dancing girls - most recently by Deér, Heilige Krone Ungarns, pp.147-8.
69. Littlewood, 'Romantic Paradises', p.109.
70. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 'Symbolê eis tèn Istorian tês Arkhièpiskopês Akhridos', Sbornik Statej Lamanskomu I (St. Petersburg 1907), pp.245-6; D. Nicol, The Despotate of Epirus (Oxford 1957), pp.54ff; Magdalino, 'Manuel Komnenos', p.108.
71. Suffa: defined as a place of shelter providing protection from the weather, originally a refuge in the mosque of Medina, by Ibn Manẓur, Lisan al-'Arab, Bulaq, Cairo AH 1300-7, Vol. XI, p.97.
72. F. Miklosich and J. Müller, Acta et diplomata graeci medii aevi III, Vienna 1865, pp.55-7; latin trans. in G. Bertolotto, 'Nuova Serie di Documenti sulle Relazioni di Genova coll'impero bizantino', Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria, XXVIII, Genoa 1898, pp.434ff; translated below, pp.254ff. Mango, Sources, p.239, dates the church to the tenth or eleventh century from its description of a cross-in-square plan.
73. A mushrabiyya attributed to fourteenth century Egypt is published by G. Wiet, Album du Musée Arabe du Caire (Cairo 1940), no.37; examples occur in the twelfth century Skylitzes manuscript in Madrid - A. Grabar and M. Manoussacas, L'Illustration du Manuscrit de Skylitzès de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Madrid (Venice 1979), e.g. pls. XX, XXXVI, fig. 249, and a thirteenth century MS from Spain or Morocco of the romance of Bayād and Riyād in Rome (Bibl. Apost. ar. 368), of which R. Ettinghausen, Arab Painting, London 1977, pp.126-7, publishes scenes; O. Grabar, 'The Illustrated Maqāmāt of the thirteenth century: The Bourgeoisie and the Arts', rept. in idem, Studies in Medieval Islamic Art XII, pp.214-5, suggested that buildings depicted in thirteenth-century MSS of the Maqāmāt can only be used 'archaeologically' where they differ from the standard typology.
74. J.C.M. Laurent, Peregrinatores medii aevi quattor (Leipzig 1864), pp.166-7; H.W. Hazard (ed.), The Art and Architecture of the Crusader States, (Vol. IV of gen. ed. K.M. Setton, A History of the Crusades) (Madison and London 1977), p.161. I am grateful to Kevin Down for clarifying obscure points in the translation of this passage.
75. D.S. Rice, The Wade Cup in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Paris 1955), pp.17ff; E. Baer, Sphinxes and Harpies in Islamic Art (Jerusalem 1965), p.8 n.52.
76. O. Aslanapa, 'Erster Bericht über die Ausgrabung des Palastes von Diyarbakir', Istanbuler Mitteilungen 12 (1962), pp.115ff and plates (of which taf.23(2) reproduced here as fig.14).
77. idem, pp.127-8.
78. Hercher, Scriptores Erotici Graeci, pp.163ff; F.P. Bargebuhr, 'The Alhambra Palace of the Eleventh Century', Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 19 (1956) pp.214-5, 219 relates this description (which he thought was 11th-century) to the fountain of Madīnah az-Zahrā, built near Cordova by 'Abd ar-Rahmān III in c.950.
79. Ettinghausen, Arab Painting, p.95; I. Stouchkine, 'Un manuscrit du traité d'al-Jazarī sur les automates du VII<sup>e</sup> siècle de l'hégire', Gazette des Beaux Arts ser.6, 11 (1934), pp. 134-40, esp. p.139 and fig.6 (reproduced here as fig.14). On the whole group of Automata MSS: K. Holter, 'Die Islamischen Miniaturhandschriften von 1350', Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen, 54 (1937), pp.5ff; H. Buchthal, O. Kurz and R. Ettinghausen, 'Supplementary Notes to K. Holter's Check List of Islamic Illuminated Manuscripts before AD 1350', Acta Islamica, (1940), pp.148-9. These mechanical toys seem almost a throwback to those of the courts of Theophilus and Baghdād. For the latter, in the court of the Tree, see A. Vasiliev, Byzance et les



Arabes II(2) (Brussels 1950), pp.77, 171 and the former, Liutprand's account, trans. Mango, *Sources* pp.209-210. See also Bargebuhr, 'Alhambra Palace' esp. pp.217ff.

80. Stchoukine, 'Un manuscrit du traité d'al Jazarī' p.137, and fig.8.



fig. 1 Personifications from the crown of Constantine IX Monomachus, National Museum, Budapest (after K. Wessel, *Byzantine Enamels from the 5th to the 13th. centuries*, Recklinghausen, 1967 Illusts. 32f-g)





fig. 2 John II Comnenus and Alexius, MS Vat. Urb. gr. 2 fol. 19v  
(after Spatharakis)

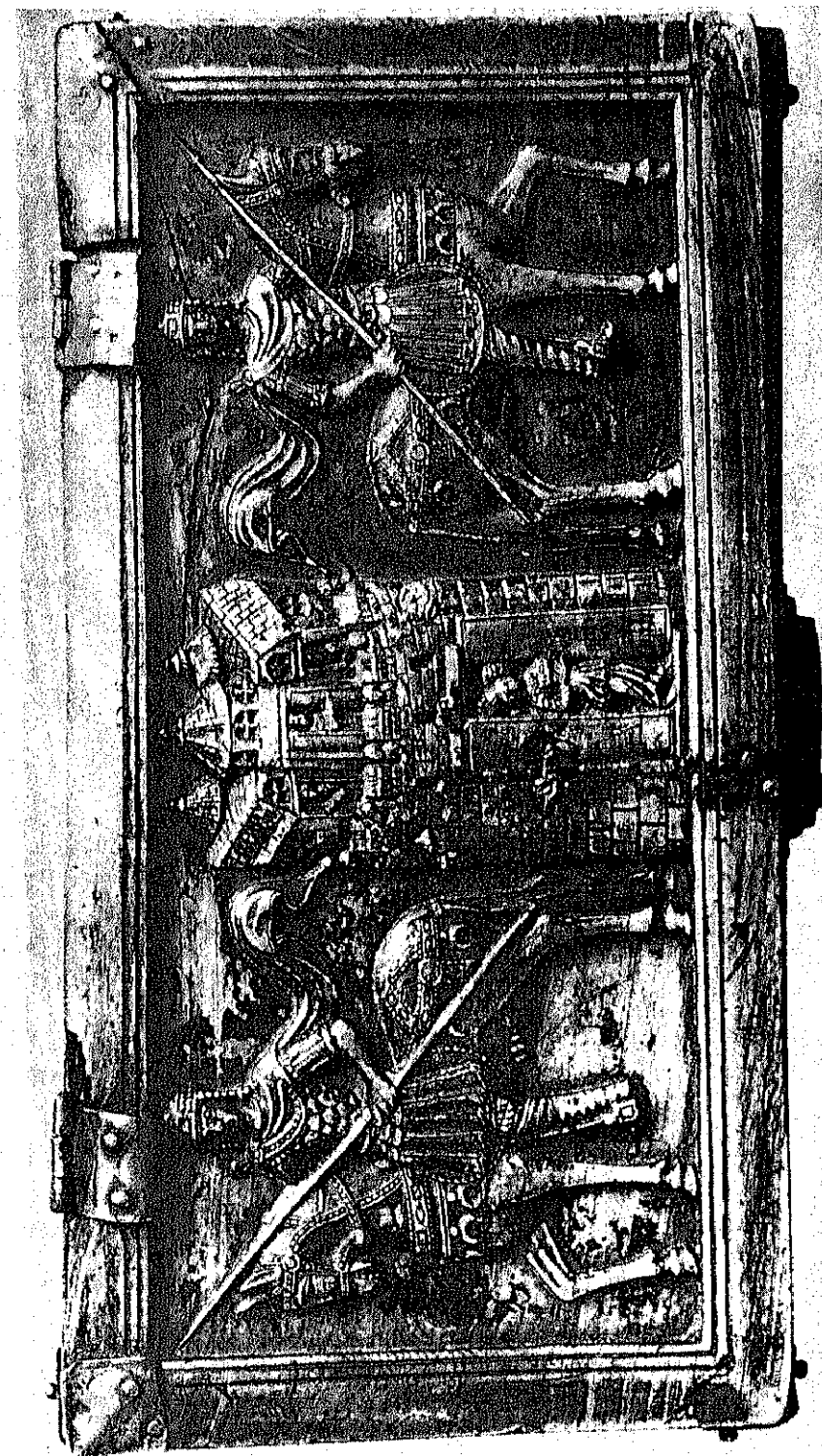


fig. 3 Ivory casket, Cathedral Treasury, Troyes (after L. Bréhier,  
La sculpture et les arts mineures byzantins, London 1973 Pl.  
XXXIII)

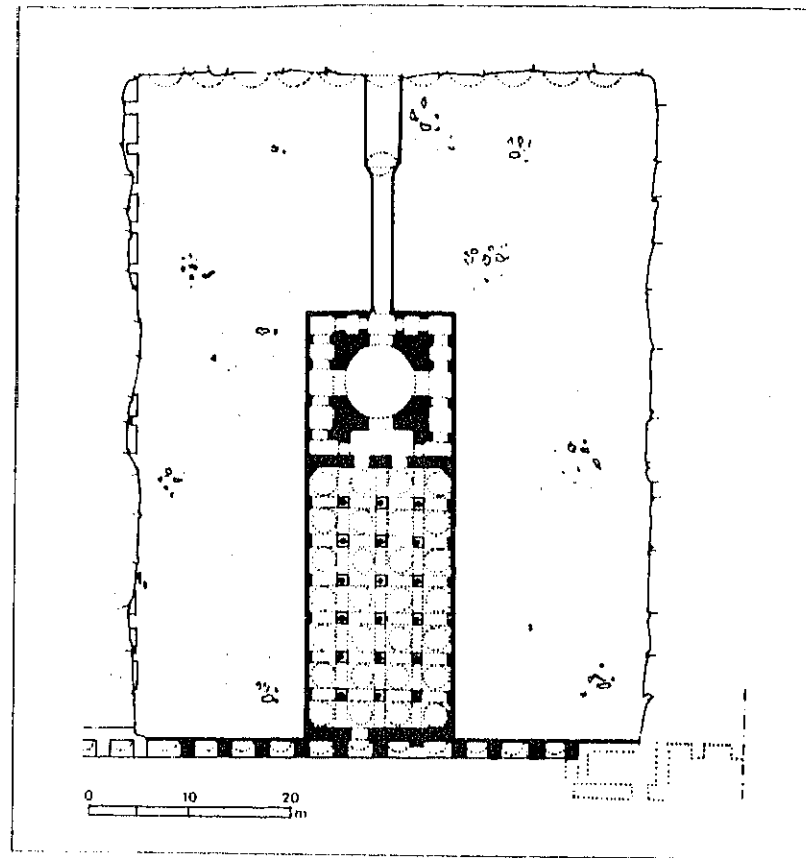


fig. 4 Maltepe, near Istanbul, plan of substructures of Bryas's palace (after Mango)

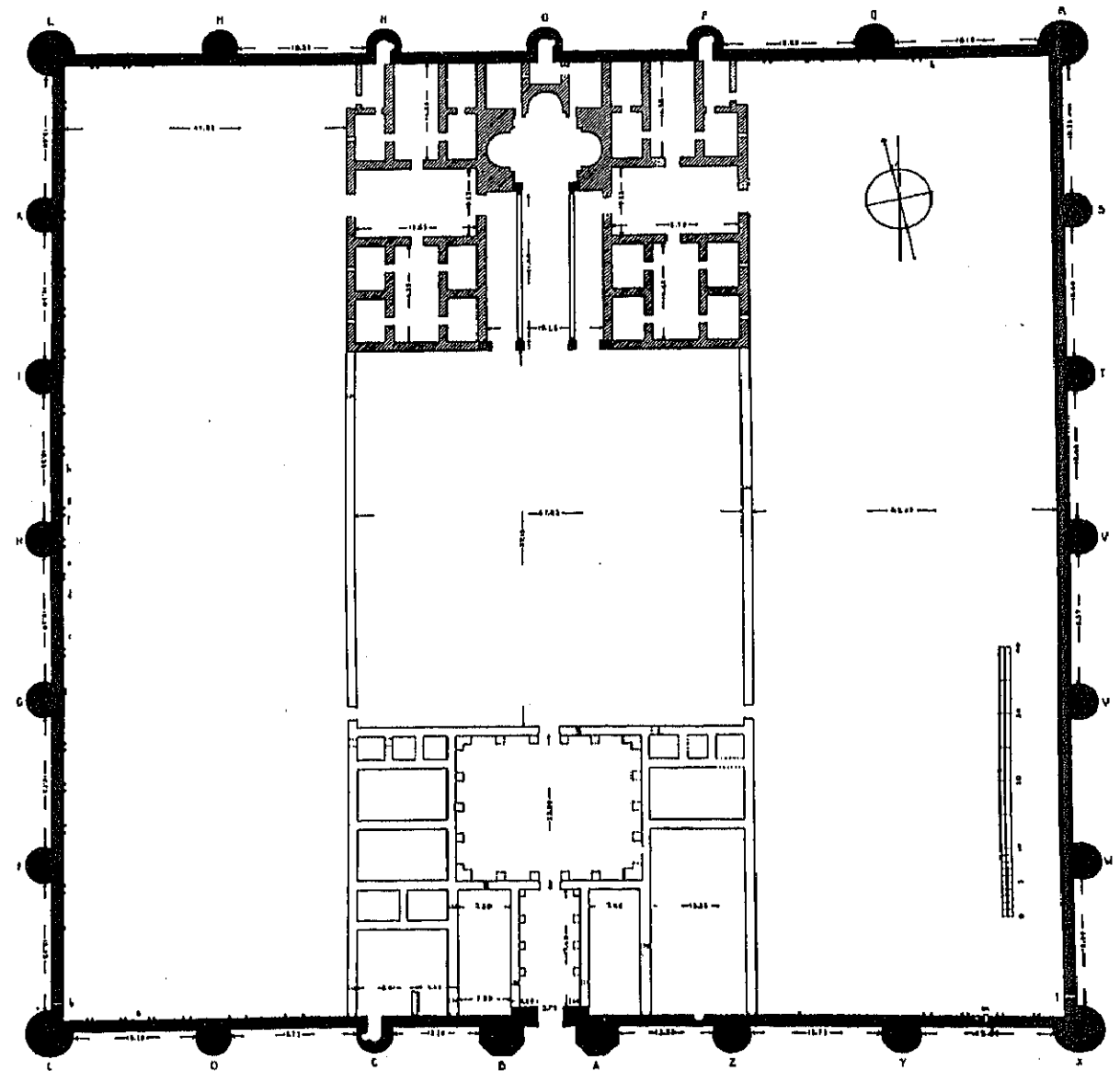


fig. 5 Palace of Mshattā, plan (after Creswell)

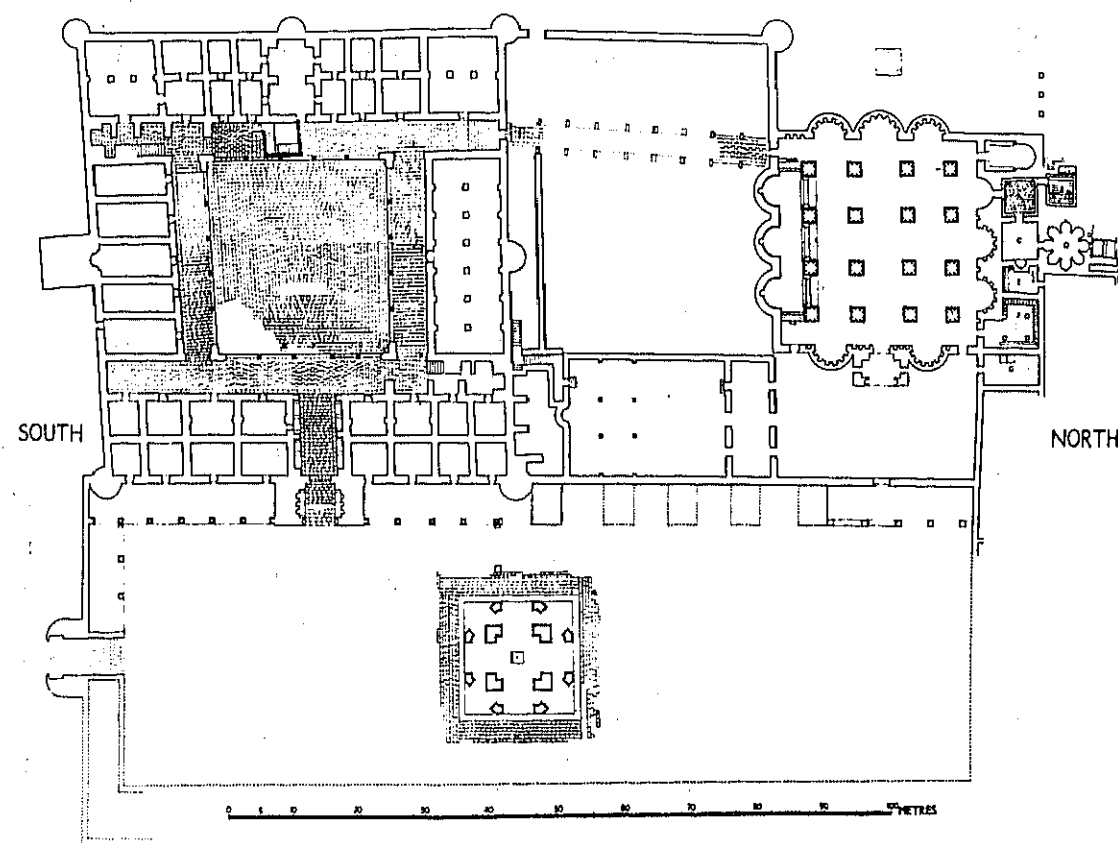


fig. 6. Palace of Khirbet al-Mafdjar (after Hamilton)

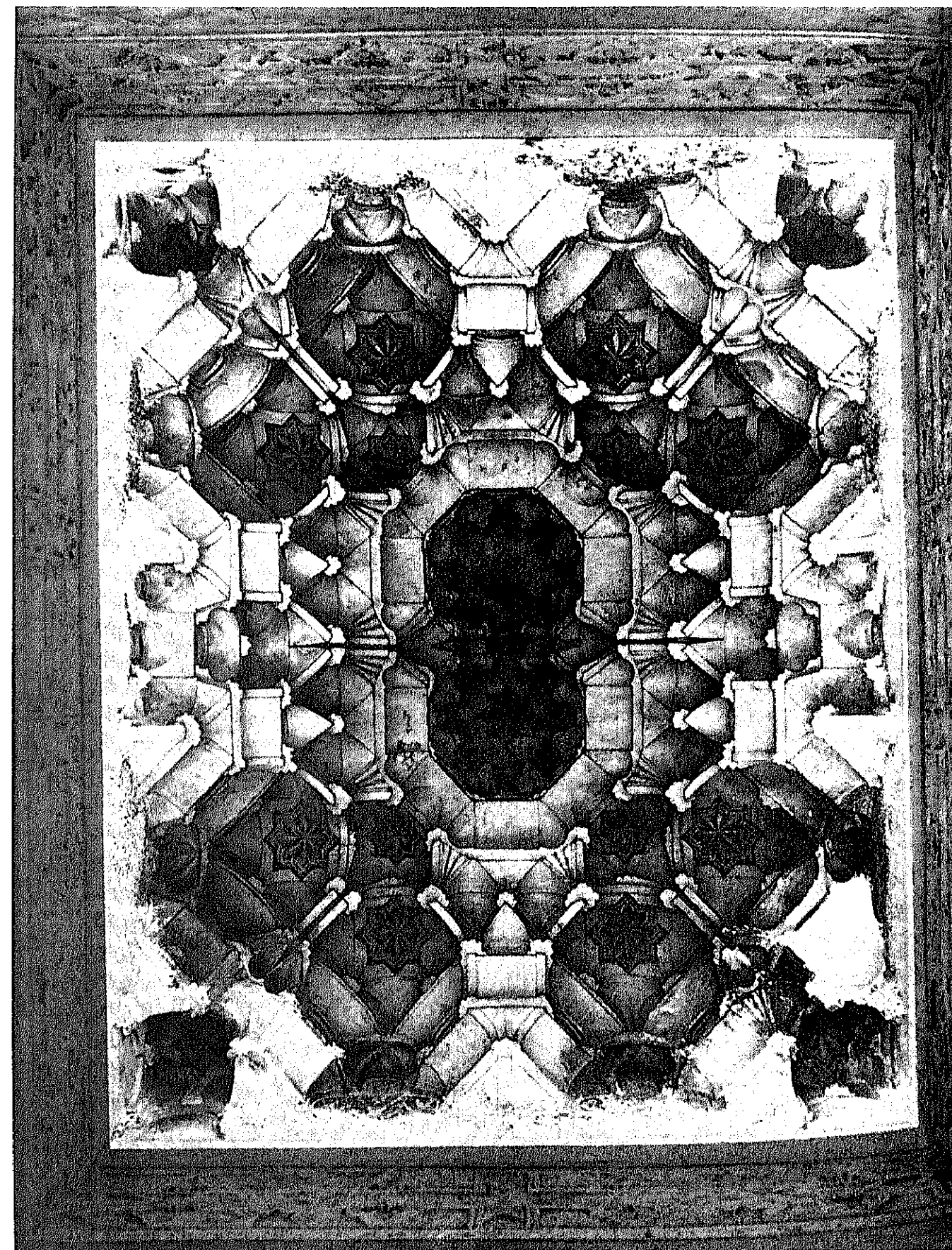


fig. 7 Great Mosque of Marrakesh (Kutubiyya), dome of qibla wall  
(after Sourdél-Thomine and Spuler)





fig. 8 Cappella Palatina, Palermo, detail of ceiling painting  
(after Monneret de Villard)



fig. 9 Konya, former kiosk of Seljuq palace (after Sarre)



fig. 10 Tiles from Konya kiosk (after Otto-Dorn and Spuler, Kunst des Islam Abb. XLI a-b)



fig. 11 Tile from palace of Kubadabad (after Otto-Dorn and Önder)



fig. 12 Detail of pavement of South Church, Pantocrator Monastery, Istanbul (after Megaw)



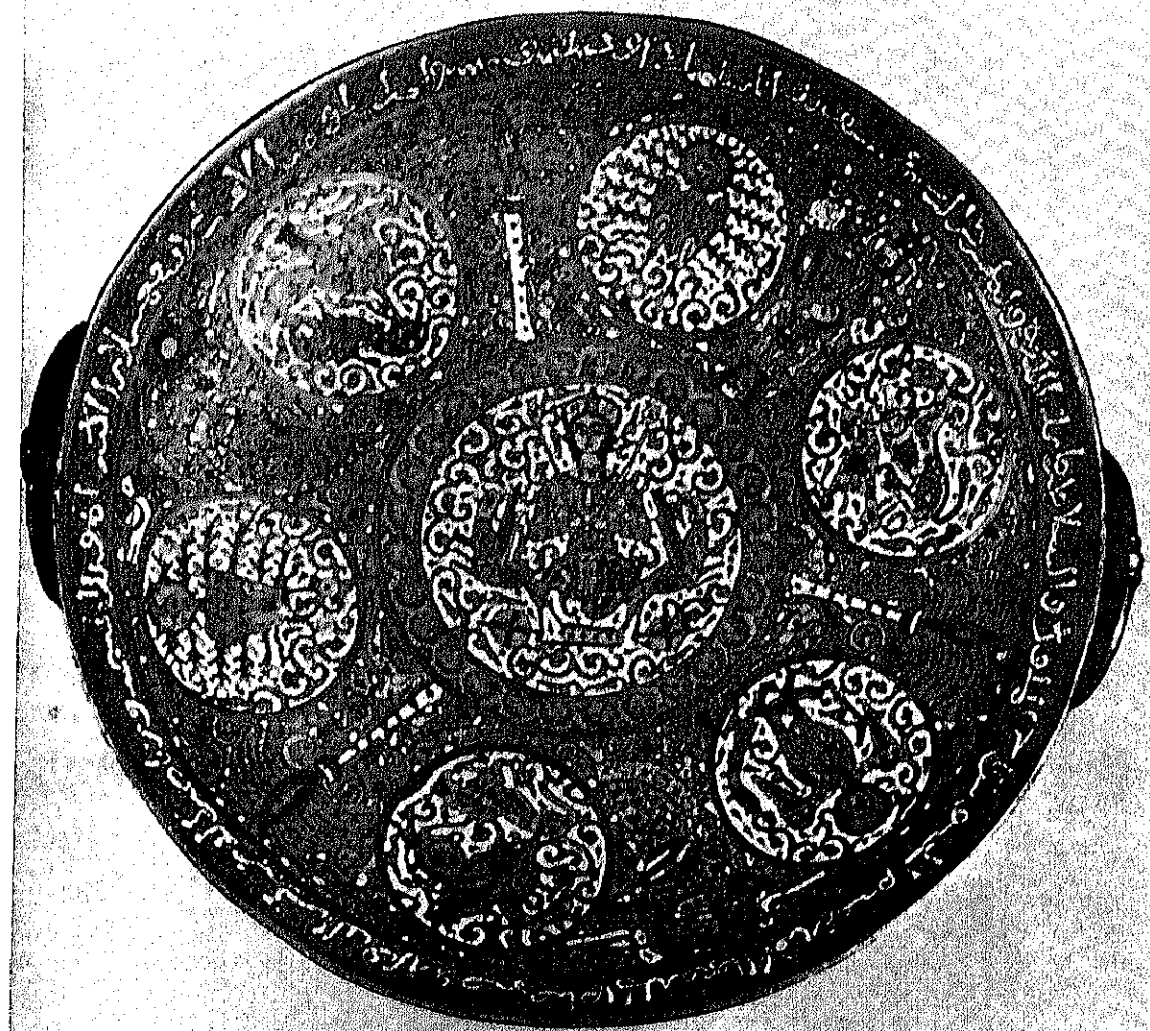


fig. 13 Enamel Plate, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, Innsbruck  
(after Sourdel-Thomine and Spuler)

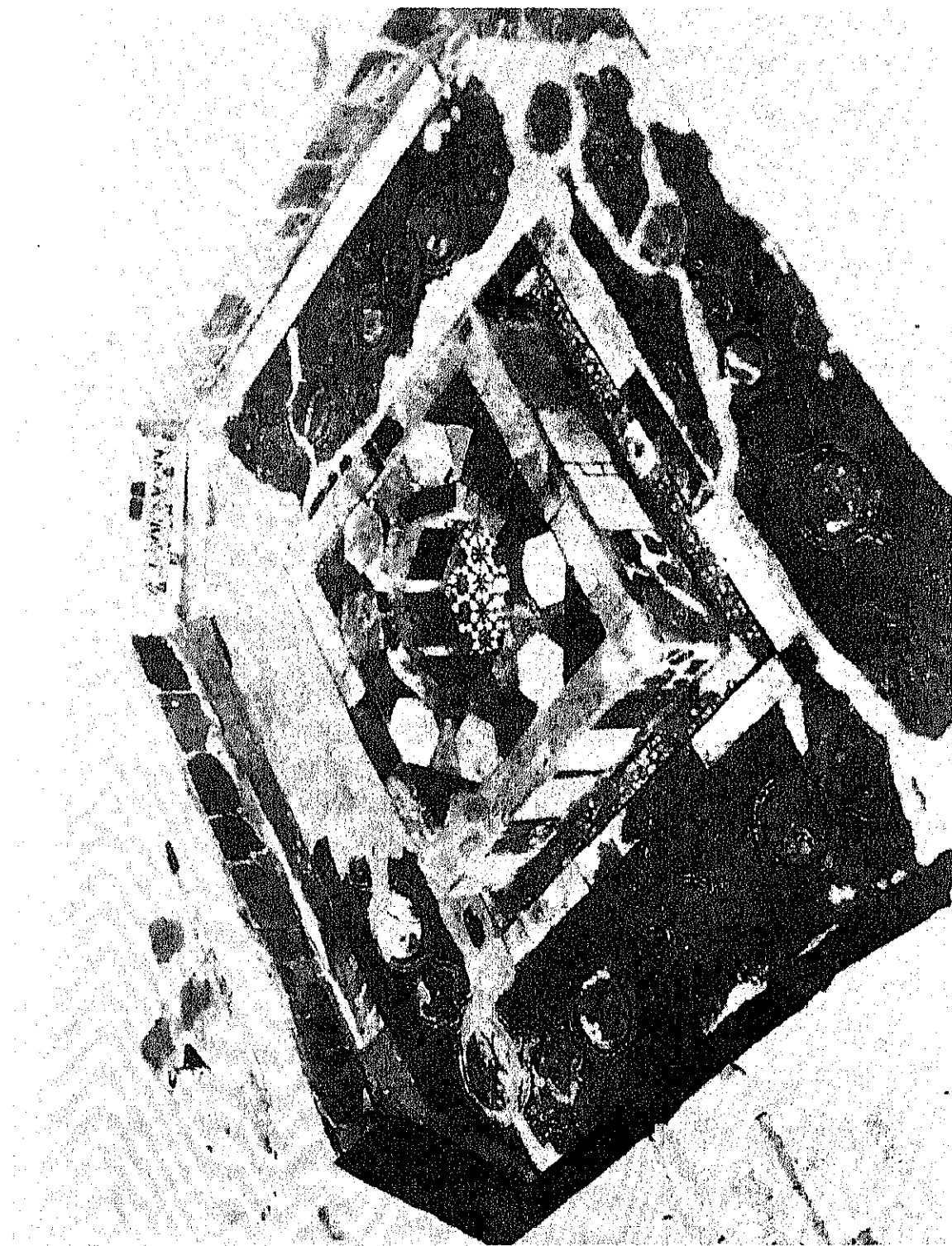


fig. 14 Fountain of Hall, Diyarbakr palace (after Aslanapa)

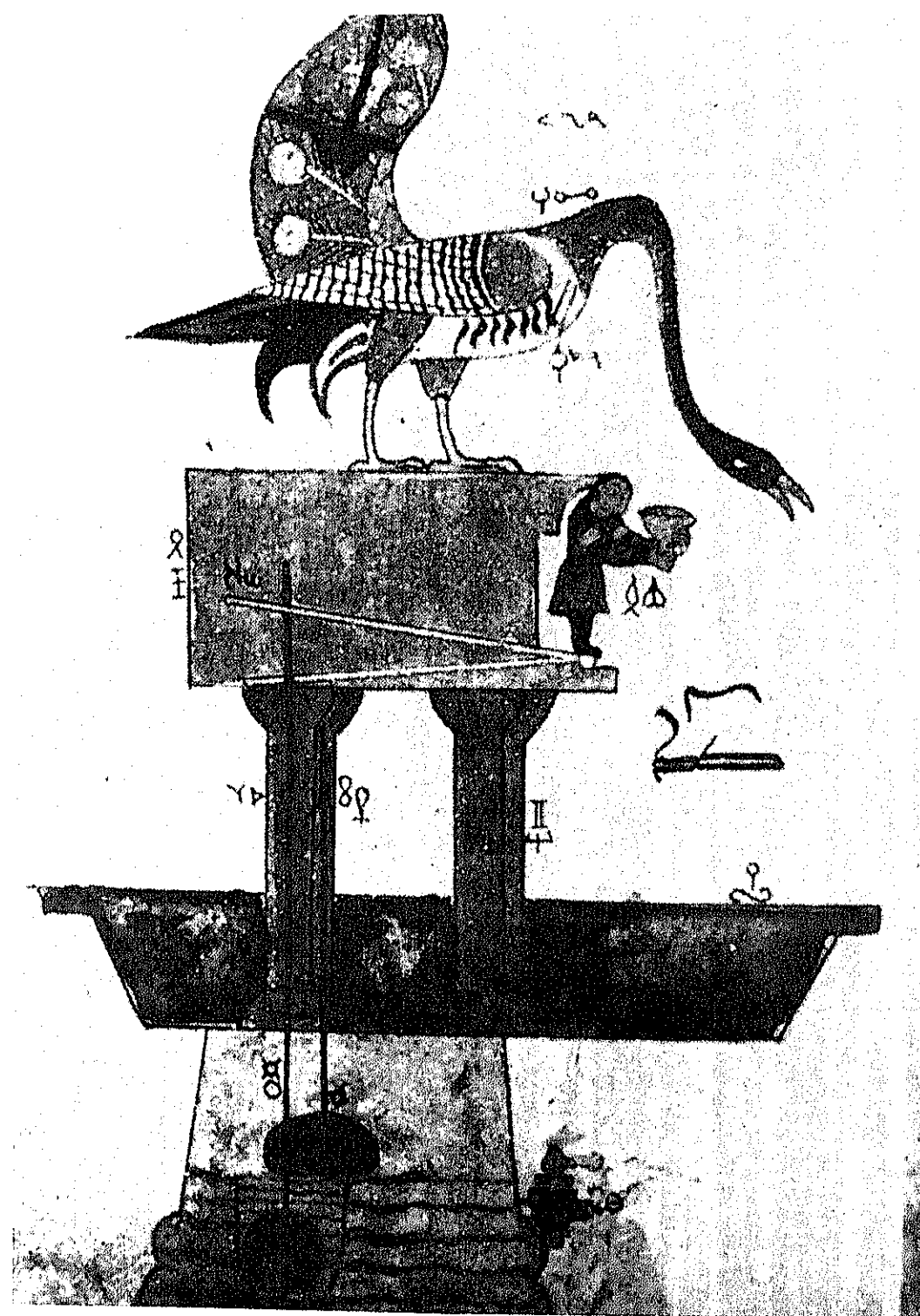


fig. 15 Peacock Fountain, MS Istanbul, Topkapu Sarayı Müzesi Ahmet  
III 3472 page 269 (after Stchoukine)

Chapter 9 - ARISTOCRATIC PATRONAGE OF THE ARTS IN 11th - AND 12th -  
CENTURY BYZANTIUM

Robin Cormack

The aim of this paper is not just to illustrate examples of aristocratic patronage, but to ask if one can find any influence made by the aristocracy as a social group on the production of the visual arts. Even the first of these two possible aims, although conceptually simple, has its difficulties, not least because of the deficiencies of the empirical evidence; for this reason some review is needed of the way in which reference is made to 'aristocratic art' in art historical literature. The outcome of such a review may be to do little more than to expose the isolation of Byzantine art historians from modern sociological theorizing on the issues involved, but even this may help to emphasise the need for a new beginning to be made in the analysis of art as a social production.<sup>1</sup> I at least have found the current exercise an essentially negative one,<sup>2</sup> but it helps to identify the crude ways in which not only art historians but also other historians interpret the visual aspects of Byzantine culture. What is disturbing is not any acceptance that there is a distinct sphere of discourse concerned with art and culture (for this can be justified), but to find such material treated as an optional extra in the study of society and religion or as an aid to mere visualisation of historical personages and their environment (treating art as 'the icing on the cake'). There is much to be done to promote the view that art is an integral component of medieval society and always encodes values and ideology which can therefore be reconstructed by the modern historian.<sup>3</sup> In the case of Byzantine culture the value of studying visual communication needs to be emphasised in the light of recent work on orality and literacy in the Middle Ages.<sup>4</sup> Unlike the literary productions of the aristocracy, the visual arts involved a more complex social construction, involving practitioners, patrons, audiences, theorists and critics, and the products themselves. The question then arises whether aristocratic patrons might be one definable element in this equation, and so, after the discussion of traditional art historical approaches, the latter part of this paper will turn to one area of documentation where evidence of the artistic activities of the aristocracy can be quantified.

I

Art historians rarely refer to 'aristocratic art' - perhaps under the convention that in the Middle Ages art is the product of the rich, and if it is not aristocratic, it is not art. This would explain why ceramics and some of the 'minor arts' are so often tacitly left aside by the art historian and have to wait for archaeological analysis. For the study of levels of patronage, it may well be that a medium like pottery with its technical indications of cost and function can lead to firmer conclusions.<sup>5</sup> Another group of objects which has taken on greater or lesser importance as an indicator of levels of patronage or of developments in the history of art depending on their supposed metallic component is the ampullae from the Holy Land. Greater prominence for these objects in art historical study resulted from the analysis of the collections at Monza and Bobbio by Grabar, but recently his conclusions have been seriously criticised by Engemann.<sup>6</sup> Grabar for example incorrectly believed that the ampullae (normally dated to the sixth or early seventh century) were made of silver; in fact, as technical examinations have shown, they were less expensive productions in an alloy of tin and lead and were presumably made in quantity.<sup>7</sup> The social position of the purchasers of this variety of pilgrimage souvenirs has yet to be determined: much also remains to be said about their status as images with 'magical' properties derived from the oil they contained.

One area of artistic production in Byzantium for which the consumers were entirely limited to the wealthy was that of illuminated manuscripts.<sup>8</sup> Such books lead us into the select society of the rich in Byzantium, whether one refers to these patrons as the aristocracy, the nobility, the élite or some such category. But there has been some attempt even within this medium to make distinctions between 'aristocratic' and 'popular' culture. This attempt has surfaced most clearly in the discussion of one type of book, illuminated Psalters. Although he expressed some reservations in using the term, Cutler in a recent discussion paper persisted in retaining the grouping of the majority of surviving Byzantine Psalters as the 'Aristocratic Psalters'.<sup>9</sup> Cutler extended membership of the set from the eight proposed by Tikkanen in 1895 to 49 manuscripts, and he continued to believe that the grouping has real validity over and above the epithet applied to it. He readily admits that the manuscripts in question lack colophons which identify the precise status of the donors, but he feels the term aristocratic to have been shown correct in one case by Belting, who had proved the patron of the thirteenth-century psalter Vatican cod. Palat. gr. 381 rich enough to commission a poet to celebrate his patronage and in the matter of the choice of a model for imitation ready to turn to a famous 'antique', the Paris Psalter of the tenth century (Paris, Bibl. nat. cod. gr. 139).<sup>10</sup> Of course the patron of the Paris Psalter itself remains elusive. Buchthal sees the surviving book as no more than a heterogeneous manufacture with the miniatures having been intended for a different book than the one in which they are now bound.<sup>11</sup> In his current opinion the text of Paris gr. 139 may have been written in 'an imperial scriptorium' in the third quarter of the tenth century, but the miniatures of this codex cannot be connected with imperial patronage (because of the low quality of some of them) although the cycle of pictures which they are supposed to copy is firmly attributed by him to the 'court atelier' of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.

The manufacture of the codex which we have may be less complicated than Buchthal's reconstruction of several stages: Dufrenne, for one, is prepared to state that the arguments based on physical evidence that the miniatures (because of their discrepancies in size) are not made to accompany the present text are not at all conclusive.<sup>12</sup> Whether one can go so far as to propose that Paris gr. 139 is the innovating manuscript rather than a slightly later copy of a lost model is very controversial (and contrary to stated opinions), but one thing at least seems clear: the earliest surviving psalter which has been denoted 'aristocratic', and which therefore stands at the head of a series, was unlikely to have been commissioned as a book by an 'aristocratic' as distinct from an imperial patron. Furthermore if what we have is no more than a rehash of a lost imperial production, then the designation of this series of manuscripts as aristocratic is, so far as the sociology of art is concerned, misleading.

The matter of 'aristocratic psalters' cannot be left here with an expression of concern about the implications of the terminology, for the traditional division of illuminated psalters into two categories has come to reflect the interpretation of some art historians of a cultural dichotomy within Byzantine society. The other side of the equation is Tikkanen's second group of psalters, those with marginal illustrations, of which the best known are the Chludov Psalter (Moscow, State Historical Museum, cod. 129) and the Theodore Psalter of 1066 (British Library, add. 19352). Those art historians who have accepted the description of these psalters as 'monastic' have tended also to see their style as 'popular' and so set up a stylistic dichotomy apparently reflecting a social division. Logically enough this interpretation has been extended to other areas of artistic production, and the most obvious connection to make was between the Chludov and other immediately post-iconoclastic psalters with marginal illustrations and the ninth or tenth century wallpaintings of the rock-cut churches of Cappadocia. The criticism of such characterisations of these works is not difficult - for example, the Cappadocian church decorations are sufficiently numerous and varied that their classification into one group is impossible. We only have to take the 'New Church' of Tokali kilise which, as has been made visible by the recent cleaning, benefited from patronage which could afford lapis lazuli in areas of blue and gilding for the haloes; this work can be dated on stylistic grounds to the middle of the tenth century when paintings as poor and limited in material resources as those of Tavsanli kilise could also be produced. Yet despite the necessity of criticism of the crude analysis of Cappadocian and other painting as popular and monastic, the possibility of some kind of interpretation of some of the art of this region in terms of social structure cannot be dismissed, and would be worth attempting.

The theory that the Chludov Psalter was produced by and for use in a monastery and was therefore good evidence of a lively folk tradition within Byzantine society was dealt a critical blow in the 1930s when Malickij identified the liturgical indications in the text as belonging to the chanted office of the Church of S. Sophia in Constantinople itself.<sup>13</sup> Much recent scholarship is consequently dedicated to the question whether one of the immediately post-iconoclastic Patriarchs was responsible for its production. As for the Theodore Psalter, this has a colophon which proves that it was produced for monastic use at the famous monastery of St. John Stoudios

in Constantinople; der Nersessian made an attempt to define what was 'monastic' about the illustration.<sup>14</sup> The field of reference uncovered by her study shows the social and intellectual range of just one, however special, monastery; in this case from committed ascetics to aristocrats in retirement or even an ex-emperor. The patronage represented by illustrated psalters alone is potentially very diverse, with the possibility of distinguishing imperial patronage, aristocratic patronage etc. or in speaking in terms of the secular clergy, the monastery, the private patron etc.

The traditional dichotomy in which the illuminated psalters have been discussed would seem to have inhibited their understanding as historical documents; unfortunately, as hinted already with reference to Cappadocian painting, the broader study of Byzantine art has also suffered from an uncritical willingness to accept undefined (or undefinable) categories or concepts. Art historians have been fairly unsuccessful in producing satisfactory surveys of Byzantine art (which, if any, can be recommended to the student?), and even the survey of Byzantine painting most frequently accepted as reasonable in its coverage of material, that of the late Viktor Lazarev, lacks subtlety in its conceptual framework.<sup>15</sup> The insecurity of the antithesis between aristocratic and popular/monastic can be recognised in the example of illustrated psalters, but the difficulties can be shown in a number of other areas of production. One icon in the collection of the monastery of St. Catherine on Sinai, discussed in a number of publications by Weitzmann and dated by him to the eleventh or twelfth centuries, represents monks climbing up or falling from the ladder which in the writing of St. John Climacus symbolises the virtues needed and the vices to be avoided for a monk to reach heaven.<sup>16</sup> In the icon, a painting of great quality, a monk at the top of the ladder is welcomed into heaven: he is identified by an inscription as John Climacus in person. The larger figure behind him is identified as Archbishop Anthony. In his analysis Weitzmann tries to come to terms with several elements of the visual evidence. Since the icon is now on Sinai and since the treatise was written in the Sinai monastery in the sixth century, Weitzmann deduces that the icon was a special commission for the monastery. He also assumes that Anthony was a historical person at the time the icon was made, presumably the abbot of Sinai, and perhaps the donor. But the style of the icon and its high quality is something which Weitzmann would clearly prefer to connect with a major artist - one from Constantinople. Instead of proposing that the icon was made in the capital and despatched to the monastery, Weitzmann prefers the attribution of the icon to the monastery itself, the work of a visiting monk.

The problem of the icon is that its refined style and dramatic use of gold conforms with the notion of its being 'aristocratic' art, but its subject matter in illustrating a text which every Orthodox monk is supposed to read every Lent can only be described as monastic. The suggestion that Anthony was archbishop and abbot of Sinai and is prominent because he was also the patron of the icon seems the most reasonable hypothesis, but unless he can be identified, his career and social background remains undocumented. If Weitzmann's idea that the artist was a 'visiting monk from the Capital' were accepted, then the icon might be considered as a paradigm of monastic art; but this idea is pure speculation and cannot be used as part of any analysis. The icon therefore must be kept in mind whenever a



definition of terms and an assessment of their use in the interpretation of visual art is made.

The same stylistic issue is set by the highly refined icon of the Annunciation in the Sinai Collection which Weitzmann dates to the late twelfth century and attributes to a Constantinopolitan artist.<sup>17</sup> Maguire has also connected the iconography of the painting with literary circles in the capital.<sup>18</sup> But the fact remains that its presence in a monastery has to be explained, and whether its unknown patron commissioned it with such a destination in mind. Another example which highlights the possible confusions is the cave church of St. Sophia on the island of Kythira, which contains wallpaintings published by Xyngopoulos as works of 'monastic style'.<sup>19</sup> But the information given in his publication reveals that the small church was not directly attached to a monastery complex (he suggests it was an oratory for hermits), that it has no written indication of its patron, and that an inscription in the decoration names the artist as Theodore (*historiographos*) and includes in his invocation his wife and child - clearly the artist was no monk. The characterisation of the wallpaintings is derived entirely from a concept of style (derived in this instance from a vague comparison with Cappadocia and South Italy). The same point could be made of attempts to 'explain' the stylistic differences between the mosaics of Hosios Loukas and Daphni; Demus was prepared to speak of the monastic style of the former and of its monkish austerity which he contrasted with influence of the taste of 'Hellenistic Court circles' on the latter.<sup>20</sup> Yet in both cases the mosaics decorated the main church of a monastery complex and would have required very substantial funds for their production. How this money was raised is uncertain in both cases, and an explanation for their stylistic appearances must depend on broader considerations; furthermore both monuments have their stylistic parallels which must be taken into account, as, for example, the conspicuous similarity of some of the mosaics of the metropolitan church of St. Sophia at Kiev with Hosios Loukas.

One reason for the arbitrary nature of the categories used apparently unselfconsciously in art historical discourse lies in the method of approach: the definition of style is undertaken first and then followed up with some kind of explanation. This method is to some extent the legacy of Wofflin, and it is now a mark of traditional art history to use the visual evidence as the basis for problem discovery. An essential part of this method is comparison, and consequently the tendency is to see the issues in terms of dichotomies. The same visual material can easily be characterised in emotively different terms: some works already mentioned can as easily be found described in the duality of metropolitan/provincial, hellenistic/oriental, or illusionistic/linear as in that of aristocratic/monastic. To make this point is not to deny that binary oppositions can be valid terms of perception and analysis, but to warn that the terms of reference chosen may lead to fantasy conclusions and that more fruitful concepts may not be developed. The distinction of aristocratic from monastic art is not a justified polarity within Byzantine society; it attempts to interpret stylistic observations within a crude framework of social structures and it ignores such obvious questions as the role of artists and other considerations in the development of Byzantine art.

In the case of one major twelfth-century wallpainting, which is certainly an outstanding masterpiece of the period (even if its innovative appearance may be exaggerated by the losses of material), the preservation of the dedicatory inscription has meant that the aspect of patronage has here been taken into account in the explanation of quality and style. This is the wallpainting of the church of St. Panteleimon at Nerezi, dedicated in 1164 and commissioned by Alexius Comnenus, grandson of Alexius I.<sup>21</sup> Although virtually nothing is known about this member of the family (what his connection was with the region near Skopje, for example), the social status of the patron has been considered in explanations of the expressive narrative art unexpectedly to be found in this monastic church. One meets the (superficial) explanation of the effectiveness of the Nerezi painter in terms of a twelfth-century 'renaissance', which must presumably be envisaged as initiated by the imperial family, art being used in the service of a political message - the revival of hereditary power - and so in one sense aristocratic in intention.

A different way of taking the patronage of Nerezi into account has been followed by Djurić.<sup>22</sup> He systematically divided wallpaintings into two groups, with numerous examples of each category. Nerezi fell into the first group of art, that ordered and directed by the laity i.e. courtiers or nobles; into the second group fell paintings like the earliest phase in the church of the Mavriotissa near Kastoria (which I date to the period around 1100),<sup>23</sup> which are described by Djurić as made on the order of monks or members of the higher clergy. He argues that the second (monastic) group reflects the social class of the patron in its choice of style; monks preferred clear contrasts of colour. Likewise the first group is distinctive because the laity preferred a richer palette in the tradition of hellenistic art. Djurić states his belief that this stylistically recognisable division occurred in art both before and after the eleventh and twelfth century examples on which his argument was based. Some of the theoretical objections to these two crudely interpreted groups have already been mentioned and do not need to be laboured, but one important point is made by Djurić. This is that the wealth of the patron may be an important factor in the style of a work of art. Is there a relation between quality in medieval art and the funds available to the patron? Do the rich obtain the best artists? It is difficult to pose the issue in the form of questions which could be answered by the available evidence, but the proposition does seem to be generally accepted by art historians. A theoretical justification can be made on the lines that within a didactic religious art system, workmanship is pre-eminently valued, and so the richer patron is the catalyst for quality in its production since he can use the most refined materials and employ the best practitioners.

## II

The shortcomings of such art historical characterisations of 'aristocratic' show how undeveloped is the present discussion of art as a projection of social structures. Within the period and scope of this paper I can do no more than suggest two more historical approaches which might lead to more constructive results.

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basis of power in Byzantium emphasises a fundamental division in the aristocracy, and recognises a civil and a military aristocracy.<sup>24</sup> The art historian needs therefore to consider whether such a division of the aristocracy could explain trends of patronage or of artistic development. Can the patronage of such major groupings be distinguished? One place to consider the question in the twelfth century is in the wallpaintings of Cyprus, where at the beginning of the century a number of churches are preserved with their wallpaintings. Recent discussions of these monuments have been in agreement about their significance.<sup>25</sup> The decoration of the chapel of the Holy Trinity in the Chrysostomos monastery commissioned by Eumathios Philokales is seen as the first of a series which includes among others Trikomo and Asinou (the latter being dated by inscription to 1105/6). The Chrysostomos paintings are taken as examples of the transfer from Constantinople of new developments in style brought by a major metropolitan painter (or painters) under the patronage of the *doux* (governor): the Asinou paintings are taken as an imitation of the new model by an inferior provincial painter working in a badly constructed small monastic church under the patronage of an otherwise undocumented Nicephorus Iskhyrios.<sup>26</sup>

Before commenting on the patronage of these paintings, some qualifications are needed on the art historical side. Although the evidence of the surviving paintings is that a new development begins in Cyprus at Chrysostomos, it is not certain that Eumathios Philokales was the employer who brought the painter to Cyprus, for a major (and now lost) imperial commission was also carried out on the island at this period in the new Kykko monastery for Alexius I. The work at Chrysostomos and elsewhere could therefore represent examples of further commissions on the island by artists who initially came to work for the emperor; this opens up the possibility that the work at Chrysostomos, Trikomo, Asinou, and elsewhere ought to be considered as the works of the same painter and his assistants and are distinguished less by quality of style than by differentials of cost, quantity and range of materials, and of speed of execution. In other words the distinction between metropolitan and provincial in these monuments is not self-evident. Another reason why the dichotomy metropolitan/provincial may be unrealistic in the twelfth century is that the quantity of artistic work carried out throughout the Byzantine world would make it feasible for major artists to have worked almost exclusively in the regions of the Empire and to have done their innovating work outside the capital, training assistants while travelling. The place of training of an artist in this period might be less important for his development than the abilities of his master. It follows that rather than interpreting paintings in terms of their relation to Constantinople or in terms of stylistic 'trends', art historians should in this period be more concerned to identify works by individual artists and to follow the implications of such attributions; such an approach would at least have its historical justification in a period when artists' signatures reflect a growing individualism in the profession.

In the present state of research, it is possible only to link the style of these early-twelfth century churches on Cyprus and not to be definite on how many artists were involved, and, if there were several, where and how they were trained. It is clear, however, that the patrons obtained works of very similar artistic principles.

There is no stylistic distinction in their general appearance. Eumathios Philokales, despite his military experience, fits into Kazhdan's category of the civil aristocracy; unfortunately nothing is known of the career of Nicephorus Iskhyrios, but he claims for himself the title of Magistros, as did other local *archontes* of the period. If one widens the field to look for works of related style in the early twelfth century, interpretation is still inhibited by lack of evidence about the patron (for example at the Mavriotissa near Kastoria, Episkopi on Santorini etc.), and it is difficult to justify any fundamental differences from such paintings as those of Bačkovo which seem to be around twenty years earlier and at a different stylistic phase, even if these are the commission of a member of the military aristocracy of the Caucasus.<sup>27</sup>

Looking at the evidence from Cyprus does not lead to any firm results about the possibility of distinguishing the patronage of the civil and military aristocracy; it does help perhaps to clarify some of the problems and to show the ambiguities which can arise from lack of documentation. We would need to have more information on the artists employed by aristocratic patrons, and whether these practitioners adapted their methods of expression to their patrons and to other conscious considerations. It might then be possible to go further than Mango does in a review of the twelfth-century painting on Cyprus in which he is only prepared to see "the sophisticated Comnenian style" as "the style of the Byzantine ruling class".<sup>28</sup>

The second approach which I wish to propose in this paper has the advantage of using as its starting point texts rather than directly formulating problems in relation to observable stylistic nuances. Out of a number of texts containing inventories of monastic holdings I shall here mention only three;<sup>29</sup> each of these represents the possessions commissioned or acquired by an individual aristocratic patron, and so falls into a category distinct from lists of items derived from a number of sources. The latter, although extremely valuable, give rise to additional problems of interpretation, which cannot be handled in a paper of this length; the former are more immediately accessible to be treated as a record of the lifetime's religious patronage of each individual. The three documents in question have all received thorough recent editorial attention, but still raise a number of problems of translation of technical terms and they describe works which have in the main not survived, or, if they have, remain to be identified. This material is therefore less likely to advance questions of stylistic change in Byzantium or of relative quality of works of art than to open up new methods of approach in quantifying patronage and identifying taste and preferences in the commission and collection of art.

The earliest of these three inventories is included in the will of Eustathios Boilas, written in April 1059 and bound in an illustrated manuscript of the Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus (now Paris, B.N. Coislin 263).<sup>30</sup> The will was written out for Boilas by Theodoulos, monk and priest in the church of the Theotokos of Salem (or Tantzoute) which was founded by Boilas in his principal residence; both men are described as Cappadocians, and Lemerle makes the case that Salem is in the region of Edessa (in Mesopotamia).<sup>31</sup> Boilas was a civil official who received recognition in the state hierarchy with the titles of *protospatharios* and *hypatos*; his active

career was spent in the service of a Doux. Relevant facts in the interpretation of his will are that his father and brothers died when he was young; his son died at the age of three in 1052/3, and his wife predeceased him too (died in 1055?). His two daughters were alive at the time he drew up his will, and both were married. He was a man aware of the antiquity of his family (the landed gentry of Cappadocia?), but he had no male heir. His possessions passed to the church rather than to his remaining family; no doubt unmarried or childless individuals were the most generous donors to the church.<sup>32</sup> Lemerle understands the will to convey the picture of a man of fanatic orthodoxy and loyalty to Byzantium, whose titles appear in reality to be of the honorific hierarchy, not of the senate (he is protospatharios of the Chrysotriklinion) - perhaps they were purchased. Some of the attitudes of a member of the civil aristocracy whose career was spent in regional administration can be understood from this document.

The list of his bequests give an account of the quantity and range of his acquisitions in the course of his career. If these are divided into four main groups, the figures are of this order:-<sup>33</sup>

36 liturgical objects and fittings (altar vessels of various materials and lights and incense holders)

32 vestments and altar cloths.

60 icons (large icons, portable small icons and copper icons)

76 books (one Gospel book specified as illustrated - with evangelists and a Nativity; two copies of Climacus are listed, but neither is said to be illustrated, although surely one must be Coislin 263)

The second document which I have selected is the Diataxis of Michael Attaleiates, signed in March 1077.<sup>34</sup> Michael was born around 1020 and died after 1079 and the document concerns the small monastery dedicated to Christ the all-merciful (Panoiktirmon) which he founded in his town house in Constantinople. His successful judiciary and literary career in Constantinople is of course well-documented and he expresses in the document his own assessment of his life: "despite my foreign (xenos) and humble origin, I became a member of the senate and among the best of the senators, for whom the ancient term is aristokratikoi".<sup>35</sup> He is therefore a good example of an aristocratic patron unconnected with the imperial family, but at the same time the extent of his patronage was limited by the extent of his finances (to judge from the lack of references to his monastery in later periods, it seems that his endowment was insufficient to guarantee its future).<sup>36</sup> The inventory of the monastery and its hospice gives the items donated by Michael Attaleiates and other donors; unfortunately one folio has been lost from the manuscript at this point, and what is missing is the full list of icons - the middle section of this list is lost.<sup>37</sup> One can only guess at the number of items which might have been mentioned on this page, and no figure could command much confidence as these inventories are prone

to record multiple small icons in one sentence. Taking into account the size of the folio and the extent of Michael's patronage of other categories compared with the other monastic inventories, my own estimate is that the lost folio might record a minimum of twelve icons, and probably not substantially more than this.<sup>38</sup>

Dividing the items into the same four groups as adopted in the case of Boilas, the figures work out as follows:-

15 liturgical objects and fittings.

8 vestments and altar cloths.

estimated 23 icons (i.e. 11 listed plus 12 or more on lost folio)

27 manuscripts.

The descriptions of some items in the groups make it clear that they were not commissioned by Michael but were 'antiques' acquired by him.

The third inventory dates from December 1083 and is included in the Typicon of the Petritzos monastery (now the Bačkov monastery in Bulgaria).<sup>39</sup> It is the list of gifts of Gregory Pakourianos, a member of the hereditary nobility of the Caucasus and enormously wealthy; he was apparently a Georgian brought up in Armenian lands who was an outstanding general of his time and became the Grand Domestikos of the West. Although 'foreign' (he could not write Greek), he was keenly Orthodox. The list of his donations is as follows:-

94 liturgical objects and fittings.

29 vestments and altar cloths.

36 icons

31 manuscripts.

The precise information given in these three inventories can be exploited for the indications given of the range of materials and craftsmanship with which these aristocratic heads of families were concerned in the course of their careers as well as for other aspects of their religious patronage. The manuscript holdings of the provincial aristocrat Boilas, for example, turn out to be more substantial than those of either of the others, even than those of a Constantinopolitan intellectual. As an instance of one of the ways in which these inventories can be used, consider for a moment the information which can be derived about the production of large special icons in the second half of the eleventh century. Boilas owned eight large panels; Attaleiates owned at least eleven large panels; and Pakourianos owned seven special panels. It therefore emerges that in the careers of these long-lived aristocrats, each was concerned with the production of less than a dozen large icons. This figure gives an indication of the amount of contact such patrons had with the artists who produced major icons; and, on the other hand, hints at

the total number of such icons which would have been produced in the period. These inventories are also an indicator of the relationships of aristocratic patrons to monasteries, and how objects moved into church possession through the financing of such families. What these aristocrats valued in spending their fortune on art was not to make a display of private secular wealth but to make a public statement of their Christian orthodoxy.

### III

To formulate a conclusion to these remarks on the study of aristocratic patronage of the visual arts is hardly possible, but the main point is perhaps worth emphasising. The study of aristocratic patronage, distinct from imperial patronage, seems more likely to gain results if the art historian reconsiders the method of starting from the visual material and deducing naive correlations between style and social class. What is recommended here is to start with theoretical considerations and to use documents issuing from aristocrats about their particular uses of art. Even such apparently stark legal documents as wills and typika can be handled in such a way as to indicate taste and preferences towards art. Other texts are those which describe their homes and domestic decoration. Visual evidence can be used in an analytic way as well; for example the Lincoln College Typikon gives evidence of how those represented wished to be seen. The combination of such visual evidence with texts could help to define how aristocrats showed their status by what they wore in processions and on official occasions. It might be useful to gain perspectives on the use of art by Byzantine aristocrats by making comparisons with other societies; such a method was constructively used by Peter Burke to study seventeenth century élites.<sup>40</sup> He was able to point to features of the urban Venetian aristocracy and how they chose to display their wealth - notably in great banquets, ostentatious weddings, and in luxurious private palaces with conspicuous exteriors. As far as Byzantine studies are concerned, the question of the aristocracy and the visual arts in all periods has not been answered; even the ways in which to formulate the issues constructively have not yet been conceptually defined.

### NOTES

This lecture was illustrated with a number of colour slides, but the pictorial examples are not integral to the argument, and I prefer to publish the text of my contribution without illustrations in order to emphasise the need for a more theoretical consideration of the problems.

1. Among useful introductions to the sociological literature are V. Kavolis, 'Art Style as Projection of Community Structure', Sociology and Social Research, 48 (1964), 166-75; N. Hadjini-colaou, Art History and Class Struggle, (London, 1978); and J. Wolff, The Social Production of Art, (London, 1981). Two recent studies by Byzantinists advance the study of the sociology of Byzantine art but without overt reference to the theoretical literature: S. Tomeković-Reggiani, 'Portraits et structures sociales au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Un aspect du problème: le portrait laïque', Actes du XV<sup>e</sup> Congrès international d'études byzantines, (Athens, 1981), II, Art and Archaeology, Communications, B, 823-36; and A. Cutler, 'Art in Byzantine Society', JÖB, 31/2 (1981), (= Akten des XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, 1/2), 759-87. Cutler states (p. 760) that it was social processes and attitudes, not social classes "that served to define the purposes of Byzantine works of art and to steer patronage in the directions it took".
2. A parallel review article is that of C. Mango, 'Lo stile cosiddetto "monastico" della pittura bizantina', Habitat, Structure, Territorio, (Galatina, 1978), 45-62.
3. Methodological guidance for the study of ancient art is given by R.L. Gordon, 'The Real and the Imaginary: Production and Religion in the Graeco-Roman World', Art History, 2 (1979), 5-34.
4. M.T. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record: England, 1066-1307, (London, 1979); F.H. Bauml, 'Varieties and consequences of medieval literacy and illiteracy', Speculum, 55 (1980), 237-65; W.J. Ong, Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word, (London, 1982).
5. As demonstrated by D.S. Peacock, Pottery in the Roman World: an ethnoarchaeological approach, (London, 1982).
6. A. Grabar, Les ampoules de Terre Sainte, (Paris, 1957); and J. Engemann, 'Palästinensische Pilgerampullen im F.J. Dölger-Institut in Bonn', Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, 16 (1973), 5-27.
7. A. Cutler, 'Art in Byzantine Society', cited in note 1, 772-6 discusses the problem under the heading 'The hierarchy of metals'.
8. On costs see N. Wilson, 'Books and Readers in Byzantium', in Byzantine Books and Bookmen, (Washington, D.C., 1975), 1-15.

9. A. Cutler, 'The Aristocratic Psalter: the State of Research', Actes du XV<sup>e</sup> congrès international d'études byzantines, (Athens, 1979), I, 423-49.
10. H. Belting, 'Zur Palatina-Psalter des 13 Jahrhunderts', JÖB 21 (1972), 17-38.
11. H. Buchthal, 'The Exaltation of David', Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 37 (1974), 330-333.
12. S. Dufrenne, 'Problèmes des ateliers de miniaturistes byzantins', JÖB, 31/2 (1981), (= Akten des XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, 1/2), 445-70.
13. For a recent discussion with references, A. Cutler, 'Liturgical Strata in the Marginal Psalters', DOP, 34-35 (1980-81), 17-30.
14. S. der Nersessian, L'illustration des psautiers grecs du moyen âge, II. Londres, Add. 19352, (Paris, 1970).
15. V.N. Lazarev, Storia della pittura bizantina, (Turin, 1967).
16. K. Weitzmann, The Icon, (London, 1978), 88-9.
17. Ibid. 92-3.
18. H. Maguire, Art and Eloquence in Byzantium, (Princeton, 1981), esp. 42ff.
19. A. Xyngopoulos, 'Fresques de style monastique en Grèce', Acts of the Ninth International Byzantine Congress (title in Greek), (Athens, 1955), I, 510-6.
20. O. Demus, Byzantine Mosaic Decoration, (London, 1948), esp. 57-61.
21. G. Ostrogorsky, Zur byzantinischen Geschichte, (Darmstadt, 1973): pp. 166-82, 'Der Aufstieg des Geschlechts der Angeli' (reprint of paper published in 1936).
22. V.J. Djurić, 'Fresques du monastère de Veljusa', Akten des XI. Internationalen Byzantinistenkongresses, (Munich, 1960), 113-121.
23. A.W. Epstein, 'Middle Byzantine Churches of Kastoria: Dates and Implications', Art Bulletin, 62 (1980), 190-207; D. Mouriki, 'Stylistic Trends in Monumental Painting of Greece during the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', DOP, 34-35 (1980-1), 77-124; the reading of the fragmentary apse inscription to give a date for the foundation of the church in the reign of the Emperor Romanos IV (1068-71) is difficult to accept, see T. Papazotos, 'Christian inscriptions of Macedonia', (in Greek) Makedonika, 21 (1981), 401-10.
24. A.P. Kazhdan, Sotsial'nyj sostav gospodstvujushchego klassa Vizantii/XI-XIIIV (Moscow, 1974); see also the summary of his arguments by I. Sorlin, 'Publications soviétiques sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle', TM, 6 (1976), 367-98. I wish to thank Professor Kazhdan for clarification on points of detail during the symposium.
25. For a bibliography of recent literature, see D. Mouriki, cited in note 23, esp. 98ff.
26. The discussion of Asinou by Cutler, 'Art in Byzantine Society', cited in note 1, p. 779, is invalidated by his incorrect identification of the donor: on him see C. Mango, 'Chypre carrefour du monde byzantin', XV<sup>e</sup> Congrès international d'études byzantines, (Athens, 1976), 3-13, esp. note 14.
27. S. Grishin, 'Literary Evidence for the Dating of the Bačkov Ossuary Frescoes', Byzantine Papers, (Canberra, 1981), 90-100 and D. Mouriki, cited in note 23, p. 99.
28. C. Mango, cited in note 26, 8.
29. References to the literature on such texts are most easily accessible in C. Mango, The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453, (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 237ff; K.A. Manaphes, Monastiriaka Typika-Diathikai, (Athens, 1970); P. Lemerle, Cinq études sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle, (Paris, 1977). For the piecemeal art historical use of such texts, see most recently M. Chatzidakis, 'L'évolution de l'icone aux 11<sup>e</sup> - 13<sup>e</sup> siècles et la transformation du templon', Actes du XV<sup>e</sup> congrès international d'études byzantines, (Athens, 1979), 333-66, and (with different results) A.W. Epstein, 'The Middle Byzantine Sanctuary Barrier: Templon Screen or Iconostasis?', Journal of the British Archaeological Association, 134 (1981), 1-28.
30. For text and discussion, P. Lemerle, Cinq Études, 15-63. The illustrations of the manuscript are discussed by J.R. Martin, The Illustration of the Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus, (Princeton, 1954), esp. 173; the artists were presumably available for employment in the region.
31. See also A. Kazhdan, 'Remarques sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle byzantin à propos d'un livre récent de Paul Lemerle', B, 49 (1979), 491-503.
32. The corollary is that family groups which reproduced and held on to the land were the least generous almsgivers and appear less frequently in this sort of document: see G. Duby, 'Lineage, Nobility, and Chivalry in the Region of Mâcon during the Twelfth Century', in R. Forster and O. Ranun, Family and Society. (Baltimore and London, 1976), 16-40 (reprinted from Annales, ESC 27 (1972), 803-22). See above, P. Magdalino, Chapter 6, pp. 92ff.
33. In all these inventories it is impossible to be certain when to regard items as referring to one object or more, and so the figures must be rough. I have not included the possessions of his late (married) sister, which are also listed. The value of the liturgical vessels in precious metals is given (300 nomismata); from South Italy in this period there are examples



of icons and silks having a valuation for use as property transactions, A. Guillou, 'Rome, Centre transit des produits de luxe d'Orient au Haut Moyen Age', Zograf, 10 (1979), 17-21.

34. P. Lemerle, Cinq études, 67-112; and P. Gautier, 'La diataxis de Michel Attaliat', REB, 39 (1981), 5-143.
35. Gautier, p. 21, ll. 44-6; xenos presumably = non-Constantinopolitan.
36. On the nature of the monastery see A. Cutler, cited in note 1, 766-7. The inventory does not list all his possessions, such as his enamelled ring in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection: M.C. Ross, Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection, volume two, (Washington, D.C., 1965), 107, no. 156. A. Cutler, 767, and note 39, refers to the will of Kalê, wife of Symbatianos Pakourianos, which lists the personal possessions of a rich woman, including personal jewelry etc. See above, R. Morris, Chapter 7, pp. 112ff.
37. See Gautier, p. 88, note 9: lost before 1761.
38. The complications arise from the possible omission of multiple icons, such as the templon with a Deisis and story of S. John the Baptist: Gautier, p. 89, ll. 1195-6. This text suggests that the scepticism of C. Walter about the Byzantine use of the term Deesis to describe the group of the Virgin, Christ, and Baptist is unnecessary - 'Two notes on the Deesis', REB, 26 (1968), 311-36.
39. S. Kauchtschischvili, Typicon Gregorii Pacuriani, (Tbilisi, 1963); and P. Lemerle, Cinq Études, 115-91.
40. P. Burke, Venice and Amsterdam, (London, 1974).

## Chapter 10 - Aristocracy and Patronage in the literary circles of Comnenian Constantinople

Margaret Mullett

When questions of literature and aristocracy arise an automatic response is to add the two together and make patronage. That this is not the only right answer to the sum is shown by two other papers in this volume, that of Alexander Kazhdan, which by charting the sometimes imperceptible shifts in the topoi of encomia, history and parainesis beautifully documents changes in aristocratic values under the Comneni, and that of Paul Magdalino, which divertingly lays bare the social illusions, aspirations and fantasy-life of (who else?) writers. But the question still poses itself: who paid for Comnenian literature, or, as I should prefer to phrase it, what was the social base of Comnenian literature?

It is no small task to attempt to answer this question. It involves the production and reception of literary works of all kinds from around the accession of Alexius Comnenus in 1081 to well into the thirteenth century, for neither the death of Manuel I in 1180 nor the capture of the city in 1204 really marks a cut-off point in literature.<sup>1</sup> By concentrating on Constantinople very little literature is excluded, at least until the end of the twelfth century when Michael Choniates and his associates in Greece appear to have set up a literary alternative to Constantinople;<sup>2</sup> previously works written in the provinces seem above all designed for the capital. And above all, it involves all the big issues, concepts and methodologies of the social study of literature at any time in any society: concepts of public, patronage, performance, orality, transmission and style.

I came to the question when I tried to set my study of letter-writing of the period against the whole of contemporary literary society. I looked for works of this kind and failed to find them. In some quarters I found a flat denial that there was a literary public at all,<sup>3</sup> and when I looked for the producers of literature they were sometimes seen as an isolated class writing in a dream-world of their own or the classics<sup>4</sup> making, sometimes as fully integrated members of society drawn from the high bureaucracy of church and state.<sup>5</sup> Literary society tends to be described in terms of analogies drawn from other societies, surely a dead giveaway: a mandarin caste which went in for coteries offers us a rather curious mixture of Indian, Chinese and French cuisine.

In signalling a lack of works on the problem I do not of course wish to suggest that Comnenian literature has been neglected: it is clearly a very exciting period. Few would now agree with Robert Browning's characterisation of it as 'an age of uncreative erudition, of sterile good taste'.<sup>6</sup> Herbert Hunger rehabilitated it as long ago

as 1968.<sup>7</sup> It is clearly a period of experiment and individualism, of parody and wit and fun, of the revival of old genres and the disappearance of others. It is becoming a fashionable home for the redating of works otherwise hard to date: the Christos Paschon, Digenes Akrites and the Belisarius Romance have, with varied success, been proposed for membership of the twelfth-century club.<sup>8</sup> Hunger's work on rhetoric,<sup>9</sup> Browning on education,<sup>10</sup> Darrouzès on the church<sup>11</sup> have all advanced our understanding. And we now know a lot more about Comnenian society in general; we know about the ruling class in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, about Comnenian government and about the relations of cities and aristocracies after the so-called eleventh-century crisis.<sup>12</sup> Work has progressed on the use of the vernacular, on levels of style, on the social status of writers and on their perception of their social position.<sup>13</sup> And above all work has begun on the truly literary appreciation of Byzantine literature for its own sake and its own time.<sup>14</sup>

But of the functioning of literary society, and detailed study of its composition and organisation, there is so far nothing. What we are offered instead are 'literary circles', a commonplace of what has been written on the period, which we might well do without - were it not so prevalent in the scholarly literature. Since Chalandon,<sup>15</sup> people have happily said that X belonged to the literary circle of Y or attended the salon of Z. Robert Browning, more cautiously, states that 'we know some of the literary circles of the earlier twelfth century'<sup>16</sup> and proceeds to sketch in a few. But in other fields this potentially facile term has been seen for the delusion that it often is. Michael Innes neatly parodies its use in Romantic literary criticism: of a totally spurious writer he has a character say, 'There's quite a lot about him. It seems that he had a circle too. Or several circles. He revolved in several circles. Whereas Shelley revolved only in his own'.<sup>17</sup> Anyone who seeks to use the term loosely should look at the magnificent demolition job done on the circle of Julia Domna by Glenn Bowersock,<sup>18</sup> in which he shows that the view which sees the empress as 'gathering around her a group of intellectual luminaries who satisfied her deep instincts for philosophy and rhetoric' is based on three contemporary references, that the received list goes back to 1879 and no further, that Galen may well have been dead before the circle got under way and that the one member apart from Philostratus who is attested in antiquity is usually missed off the lists. 'The custom', says Bowersock has been to fill out the literary circles of Antiquity 'with persons not explicitly attested as belonging to them'.<sup>19</sup>

But Philostratus did say that he had been a member of her kyklos, and similarly the Byzantines of the twelfth century had a word for literary circle, in fact several. The word is theatron, which was made part of our vocabulary first by Professor Hunger.<sup>20</sup> I shall start by looking at some literary evidence for these theatra before turning to social factors and more general issues.

The word theatron used for a literary gathering has a long pedigree. In particular it was used during the Byzantine centuries for the meetings of groups of friends to read aloud and comment on literary texts written, perhaps from a distance, by absent members of the circle. Examples are attested in the writings of Libanius, who specifically mentions the reading out of a letter, Synesius and

Procopius of Gaza in the early period, in Psellos, Nicephorus Gregoras, John VI Cantacuzenus, who records the amount of applause given to any particular offering, Manuel II Palaiologos, whose circle listened to speeches, poems and letters, Demetrius Kydones and John Khortasmenos.<sup>21</sup> The emphasis in these gatherings was on the performance to a learned and literary audience of new works of art, a preview rather than a seminar. For the Middle Byzantine period the evidence has always appeared less strong, but with the recent stream of editions of letters, speeches and other rhetorical works it has become possible to fill in the gaps a little. But we are far from a complete picture.

For one thing, it seems that writers were affected by the knowledge of the potential performance of their work and occasionally include images which derive from it. For example Theophylact of Ochrid, writing to Romaïos uses the imagery of performance: "You have deafened my ears with your account and with your applause" and in a letter to John Doukas he expresses the wish for the time to write, so that he could lead the chorus and fill out the logikê choreia.<sup>22</sup> Neither reference, only two of many, need mean any more than its core of sense, but both images would have had more significance for the recipient if he were envisaging it in relation to oral performance. Again ambiguous, but possibly indicative is the description by Eustathios Makrembolites of his novel Hysmine and Hysminias as a drama: where should a drama be performed but in a theatron?<sup>23</sup> But far more useful is a series of references in the letters and speeches of George Tornikes I and Michael Italikos to something which they refer to sometimes as theatron, sometimes as kyklos. In letter 17 to Nicephorus Bryennios the historian, Michael Italikos sends greetings from Constantinople to somewhere in the provinces and describes the effect the other's letter had had on his logikon theatron:

When your letter was brought into the logikon theatron it gave forth your voice and your song, with such literary grace, such a gift of the Muse, such rhetoric that I cannot describe it. How it sang, how it filled us with joy .... were it not for the form, the regularity of rhythm and the suitability of the language we should all have been carried away with enthusiasm, both the reader of the letter and the audience.<sup>24</sup>

In a speech we learn the identity of the leading light of at least one of Michael's circles: Eirene Doukaina, the mother of Anna Comnena and of the emperor. He compares himself to cicadas or a swallow: just as their song responds to the sun in springtime so does his eloquence respond to the warmth of her presence as judge.<sup>25</sup>

One of the activities of the kyklos is revealed in speech XV, where he tells the audience that he was called upon by the Basilissa Eirene to improvise a speech, which he does, ending with the remark that he mixed philosophy with his rhetoric because the peri tèn basilida kyklos was oude pantapasin aphilosophos.<sup>26</sup> We learn of other members of the group in his monody on Andronikos Comnenus, where he describes the dead man as an astêr in the circle of his mother,<sup>27</sup> and in George Tornikes's funeral oration on Anna Comnena,

where the connection of Anna and Nicephorus Bryennios with Eirene Doukaina in the encouragement of the Muses is evoked, albeit in very general terms.<sup>28</sup> Here at last is some proof of a literary gathering under the aegis of the Empress Mother, involving the reading aloud of letters and the improvising of speeches. But of its composition, beyond Anna, Nicephorus, Andronikos, Michael Italikos and perhaps George Tornikes, we know nothing.

But these literary gatherings do not always appear to have such a convener, at least explicitly. In a puzzling passage<sup>29</sup> Nicholas o Kataphloron, teacher of Gregory Antiochos, describes a sylogos composed of a dozen or so sophistai who emulate the ancients in their literary productions, which they perform boisterously, tumbling or dancing with words. They are so productive and their works so beautiful that they become known and people invite them to their homes where they make speeches and sing songs, at table and elsewhere. From this both their hosts and the city derive honour. This appears to be another example, slightly different from Eirene's, of a real literary circle. In fact we should not be surprised at variations in this embryonic pattern, for it seems likely that our theatra were only one of many kinds of gatherings where reading aloud or declamation occurred, from the sewing circles of ladies complete with spiritual father<sup>30</sup> through the reading aloud of saints' lives at meals,<sup>31</sup> the performance of speeches to the emperor in front of a kyklos or choros<sup>32</sup> to the reception (dying out at this time) by congregations of new hymns and sermons.<sup>33</sup>

So far our literary evidence leads us. What we next need to do is to consider ways and means of adding the missing social dimension to these tantalising references and to see whether we can people Eirene Doukaina's ghostly logikon theatron. I shall start by trying to imagine the location of such gatherings, the milieux in which they might flourish.

The first of these is the court. We are fortunate in that we know a reasonable amount about the courts of the three Comnenian emperors, Alexius, John and Manuel. We are told about the physical framework of the court in the two major palaces of the Blachernai and the Great Palace;<sup>34</sup> we know a reasonable amount about the personnel of the court through the very full synodal lists especially of 1094, 1157, 1166 and 1170, enough to realise the extensive system of 'clan government' practised by the Comneni.<sup>35</sup> We can watch the court outside Constantinople, reconstruct a certain amount of ceremonial and we know that entertainment was revolutionised through the adoption of tournaments.<sup>36</sup> We are well informed of the tone of the court: Alexius's monastery-court,<sup>37</sup> John's austere high-command, Manuel's anakainesis and flashy glamour, complete with suburban love-nests.<sup>38</sup> Court life is 'in short' well documented, that is to say writers were aware of what went on in the court, and the Comnenus family itself was no stranger to literature, although it should be said that this was of varied quality. Alexius composed verses and polemics, Anna Comnena, Nicephorus and a Sebastokrator Isaac each made a contribution.<sup>39</sup> But, unlike the Palaeologan period, when, ironically, scholars have pointed to falling imperial patronage as a factor in literary decline,<sup>40</sup> it is so far impossible to anchor one of these floating theatra in the capacious courts of any emperor.<sup>41</sup> Indeed beyond the specifically functional deme poetry of Theodore Prodromos it is

hard to find any author writing for the court alone and certainly not entirely financed on a long-term basis like some poets laureate. Piece-work seems to be more the rule than sustained patronage, again possibly with the exception of Theodore Prodromos. Certainly Nicholas Kallikles wrote a great deal of poetry geared to, and presumably commissioned by, a court readership. But he was already ensconced in court circles and on the pay-roll as archiatros, so I think it unhelpful to label him a 'court poet'.<sup>42</sup> Dedications and commissions are few: Euthymios Zigabenos's Panoply, Stephen Physopalamites's Alphabet, John Kamateros's astrological poem and Michael Glykas's proverbs are among the works offered to reigning emperors.<sup>43</sup> Even if we turn up any more, the evidence would still be so slight as to be insignificant.

A second possibility is to look in the academic institutions of Constantinople for coteries of friends meeting for the purposes we have been examining. It is often difficult to decide in a rhetorical text whether it is referring to a teacher with his kyklos of pupils or to a literary circle proper. Michael Italikos writes a letter inviting a friend to a philosophical banquet offering separate courses of Plato, Aristotle and so on.<sup>44</sup> Is this a school or a theatron? John Tzetzes, in a passage spotted by Nigel Wilson, refers to an advanced classical seminar attended by people with texts in hand.<sup>45</sup> School or theatron? Professor Browning in a preliminary attempt to outline some of the literary circles of the twelfth century marks out what he calls the patriarchal School as the home of theology, grammar, rhetoric and belles-lettres and notes Michael Italikos as a leading figure, distinguishing it from the one around Anna Comnena.<sup>46</sup> While it is true that the teachers in patriarchal jobs (maistôr ton rhetorôn, didaskalos tou psalteros, didaskalos tou apostolou, oikoumenikos didaskalos) did write in these genres (it was after all their bread and butter) they range widely outside them, and no literary figure of note with the possible exception of Nicephorus Basilakes<sup>47</sup> can be linked only to other patriarchal academics. Other teachers are heard of only in the context of grammar or schedography, but they appear to be rather dreary school-masters and fall outside the scope of the present inquiry.<sup>48</sup> So even if the Patriarchal School existed as a school, it would be no solution either.

Finally we must examine the most likely possibility from our literary evidence, that the theatra and kykloi of the twelfth century were in effect salons, under the kindly guidance of noble, often imperial, often widowed ladies. This is clearly how Chalandon saw what he described as literary circles, but it carries with it the flavour of nineteenth-century Paris, a rather Proustian perspective. I think we should take care. For the Comnenian period five noble ladies have been canvassed as candidates for the role of patroness of literati and grande dame of a literary salon. These are the ex-basilissa Maria, Anna Dalassena, Eirene Doukaina, Anna Comnena and Eirene the Sebastokratorissa. Without further information on salons and theatra as such we must deal at the same time with the not inevitably connected<sup>49</sup> roles of literary patroness and patroness of a salon.

The ex-basilissa Maria,<sup>50</sup> who was married successively to Michael VII Doukas and Nicephorus Botaneiates, played a crucial part in the arrival of the Comneni to power in 1081. Her 'alternative

court at the Mangana after the coronation of Eirene, Alexius's wife, has been seen by scholars like Robert Browning and Lowell Clucas as the forum for the 'enlightened' philosophical group which they see Alexios as repressing at the beginning of his reign.<sup>51</sup> Two manuscripts and an enamel with her portrait survive, and another manuscript belonging to her is recorded; Eustratios of Nicaea dedicated a meteorological treatise to her and Theophylact wrote one speech, at least one letter and two biblical commentaries for her.<sup>52</sup> But there is no evidence to suggest a theatron.

Anna Dalassena, the mother of Alexius Comnenus was equally a figure of power - a very austere figure - in the early days of the Comneni, and we rely upon Anna's account of her rule to furnish us with certain indications that her entourage, though primarily clerical, may well have included some literati; she provided Alexius with the panoplist Zigabenos.<sup>53</sup> But the evidence again is simply not there.

Eirene Doukaina, as we have seen, is quite another case. She was the daughter of Andronikos Doukas, married Alexius on the insistence of the Doukas family and the patriarch and established her control over Alexius, especially through his illnesses, until he was quite dependent on her - except over the succession. She founded the convent of the Kekharitomenē in Constantinople and ended her days there at the latest in 1133.<sup>54</sup> We are now on much firmer ground. We know that she commissioned Nicephorus Bryennios's Hylē Historias,<sup>55</sup> that she was in correspondence with Nicholas Kataskepenos (the author of the Life of Cyril Phileotes) and possibly with Theophylact of Ochrid,<sup>56</sup> that she commissioned poems from Nicholas Kallikles and possibly from Manuel Straboromanos. He wrote a speech of consolation for her on the death of her brother Michael the protostrator; Theodore Prodromos wrote her verses of consolation of the death of her son Andronikos.<sup>57</sup> We now know also that she did have a circle, whether in the Kekharitomenē or elsewhere, which was called by contemporaries a theatron.

Anna Comnena is different. Her learning and her interest in letters are quite clear from her Alexiad as well as from George Tornikes's long funeral oration on her, but an important feature of her work revealed there and commented on by Professor Browning is her encouragement of a group of Aristotelian commentators who included Michael of Ephesus, Eustratios of Nicaea and possibly James of Venice. It may well be that she persuaded them to undertake the work and divided up their tasks. But evidence of an independent literary salon of her own, as distinct from that of her mother is so far lacking.<sup>58</sup>

The final example is perhaps the most famous: in every work which touches on twelfth-century civilisation a word is spared for the 'circle of the Sebastokratorissa Eirene'.<sup>59</sup> Recently with the extensive researches of Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys<sup>60</sup> the full importance of this figure is becoming apparent. She was the wife of Andronikos Comnenus, John II's second son, who died in 1142 while bringing the corpse of his brother Alexius back to Constantinople. She led a rather chequered career after the accession of Manuel, but despite imprisonment in the Great Palace, the Princes Islands, the Blachernai and the Pantokrator and exile in Sofia she was a focus for

the works of some of the most remarkable writers of the 1140s and appears also to have commissioned some manuscripts. Theodore Prodromos wrote four occasional poems, an astrological poem and a grammar for her; she commissioned Tzetzes to write Hesiod and Homer and his Theogony for her; Constantine Manasses wrote encomia for her and dedicated the Synopsis historikē to her. Manganeios Prodromos wrote poems for her, and the monk Iakovos wrote forty-five letters of spiritual counsel for her. Yet she cannot be seen as the literary inspiration of all the works of these writers; some of the highly esoteric satire and parody of the novelists, for example, would seem to be out of keeping with the standard of education which needed Tzetzes's Theogony or Prodromos's grammar.<sup>61</sup> And there is no indication I am aware of that these writers met together under her aegis.

So at this point with the exception of Eirene Doukaina we appear to have drawn a blank. If instead of chasing these circles round the palaces, schoolrooms and private houses of Constantinople we look rather at the mechanics and processes of literature in the twelfth century, we may see the significance of these theatra. In the

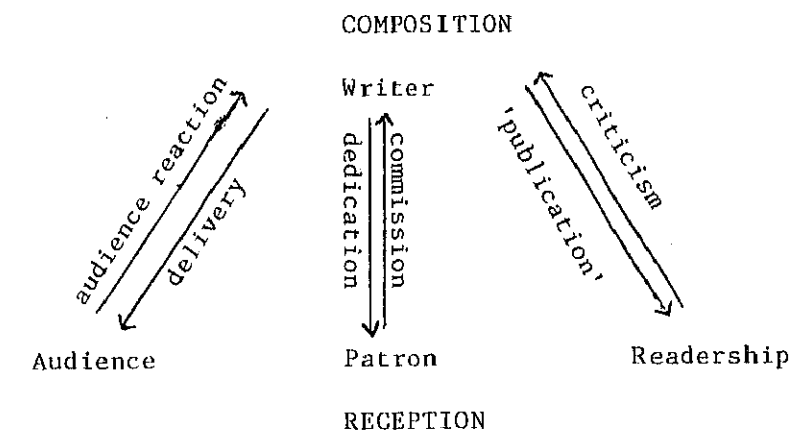


diagram they clearly come under the head of audience, a much understudied aspect of the reception of Byzantine literature, though in its general sense audience analysis has recently become a fashionable aspect of modern literary criticism.<sup>62</sup> Students of oral literature in Byzantium tend to lose interest when they have decided that their chosen work was not orally composed, just orally delivered,<sup>63</sup> and students of the written word are understandably more interested in manuscripts. The written word of course has primacy in Byzantium, the spoken word lacking both the symbolic value attributed to it in ancient Athens by Averintsev<sup>64</sup> and the stylistic adaptations of Western medieval literature to suit it to aural reception.<sup>65</sup> But orality is still important in Byzantium, for entertainment after the death of the theatre,<sup>66</sup> for publicity and the sharing of a rare commodity and for the editorial purposes suggested by Auerbach, without much enthusiasm, for literary readings in Antiquity.<sup>67</sup> It has even been suggested by Hunger that the theatra were consolation prizes for the low status and lack of material wealth of literati.<sup>68</sup> And there may be a new life for orality in the twelfth century in the wake of the eleventh-century revival of rhetoric.<sup>69</sup>

And if, turning to the category of readership in the reception process, we draw extreme conclusions from recent work, the importance of audience and theatra grows correspondingly. If (and here I brush to one side the protests of Browning, Patlagean and to some extent Marlia Mundell)<sup>70</sup> the cost of books is thought to be beyond the pocket of a minor civil seryant,<sup>71</sup> if chronicles are thought of as light reading for the court,<sup>72</sup> if the vernacular experiments are seen as a literary game of the learned classes,<sup>73</sup> if Digenes Akrites was written for a learned Constantinopolitan audience,<sup>74</sup> and above all if lower-style metaphrases were used for reading other people's books while you yourself wrote in high style,<sup>75</sup> it is conceivable that the readership of Byzantine literature was no wider than its audience, an audience comprising the sum of all contemporary theatra with the addition of country members (exiled bishops, for example, panting to get back)<sup>76</sup> and superannuated members (there is some indication that historiography tended to be written late in life or while authors were out of circulation).<sup>77</sup> It may well be that audience and readership were simply two sides of the same coin.

Patronage comes at an earlier stage of the process than either audience or readership. We have already encountered some of the problems connected with the concept. As usual many of them arise out of definitions. The word 'patronage' is made to serve many different functions by literary historians of any period,<sup>78</sup> and the twelfth century is no exception. The range spreads from Eirene Doukaina's suggestion to Nicephorus Bryennios that he might write the Hylê Historias, through her<sup>79</sup> obtaining of a job as didaskalos tôn iatrôn for Michael Italikos<sup>80</sup> to the payment of such poets as Theodore Prodromos and John Tzetzes, who clearly depended on commissions as their major source of income, and the apparent maintenance of Manganeios Prodromos as household poet.

Sometimes it is impossible to tie down these graduations: occasionally a dedication of a work may give no idea whether it is a purely hack job paid for on the nail, like many of the epigrams written for works of art at the time (presumably you commissioned your icon painter, your silversmith and your poet at much the same time) or a piece of educational work commissioned and paid for, or a genuine dedication like perhaps Theodore Prodromos's poem 'On the Great and the Small', dedicated to Michael Italikos.<sup>80</sup> Or, with a given body of information it may be difficult to decide whether one person acted in the role of patron to another (even where it is explicitly stated, it has been suggested recently, we should be just as conscious in a literary work of the persona of patron as of poet),<sup>81</sup> as I have tried to show in a recent study of the relations of Theophylact of Ochrid and Maria the ex-basilissa.<sup>82</sup> His basilikos logos of the 1080s in which he praises her learning, her philanthropia, but above all her generosity, and a letter of the 1090s in which he describes her as tên emên meta ge theon antilêpsin make us suspect that his rapid advancement throughout the 1080s may have had something to do with a word in the right place during her period of influence with the emperor. But the only two works known to have been dedicated to her were written during Theophylact's archiepiscopate and give us no further clue of their relationship.

This problem of definition is not exclusive to literature, though the patronage of literature does seem to pose particular problems. One wonders whether we cannot learn a great deal from the experience of students in other disciplines. For one thing, I may quibble at accepting a dedication as evidence for patronage, but fifteen thirteenth-century manuscripts can be assigned to the patronage of one noble lady (who does admittedly have the right surname) by what looks to the historian-outsider like wishful thinking.<sup>83</sup> And what would an art historian make of a classicist's recent dictum that 'there did not exist a Roman code of literary patronage' because 'the patrons did not conceive of themselves as playing a role in the encouragement of letters'?<sup>84</sup> We surely should not price ourselves out of the market by setting impossible standards. And definitions of personal patronage, attractive as they are and applicable as they are to Byzantine society,<sup>85</sup> are probably too restricting for our present purposes; they demand reciprocal exchange of different goods and services, unequal status of the partners and a personal link of some duration.<sup>86</sup>

For what does seem clear in the twelfth century is that writers, like perhaps manuscript illuminators,<sup>87</sup> were promiscuous in their reception of patronage: Theodore Prodromos in claiming he was never the servant of many masters appears to be an exception.<sup>88</sup> If one tries to draw links between major writers in the twelfth century and their patrons and patronesses, it becomes easier to group the patrons around the writers than the writers around the patrons.<sup>89</sup> It has always been assumed that literary circles radiated from their patronesses, and therefore it was only necessary to establish all the authors who wrote for a particular lady and a circle would be established. But it does not seem to have worked like that. Nicholas Kallikles wrote for Eirene Doukaina, the Sebastokratorissa Eirene, John Arbanites and his wife Anna, the wife of Gregory Kamateros, the widow of Roger the sebastos and the husband of Dokeianê as well as for John Comnenus;<sup>90</sup> Theodore Prodromos wrote for Eirene Doukaina, then for the court of John, then for the family of Anna Comnena, Nicephorus Katakalon Euphorbenos, the Kontostephanoi, Alexius Aristenos, Theodore Stypeiotes his ex-pupil, Zoe Botaneiatissa, Constantine Alopos, Andronikos Kamateros, the Sebastokrator Isaac as well as for the Sebastokratorissa Eirene; the 'innumerable occasional poems' he is supposed to have written for her boil down in fact to four.<sup>91</sup> John Tzetzes wrote for Bertha von Sulzbach as well as for the Sebastokratorissa Eirene, and when she died while he was in mid-work, he replaced her with a new patron for his Iliad Allegories, whom he found in Constantine Kotertzes.<sup>92</sup>

Having considered the question of what patronage for our purposes is or is not, there is another question to address: how influential was patronage in twelfth-century Byzantium? I suspect art historians would be surprised if I were to suggest that the patron did not have a say in the appearance, and indeed the quality, of a work of art,<sup>93</sup> yet Byzantinists to my knowledge have only recently started to follow classicists in making the same assumptions for literature.<sup>94</sup> Or, to put it another way: are we to look to changes and new developments in literature as evidence of the tastes and preferences of patrons? Did a twelfth-century nobleman get up one morning and say: How shall I spend that small windfall? Shall I found a monastery, or shall I commission a psalter, or do I need some



more light reading, in which case let us have an adventure story this time? Claims almost of this kind have recently been made for patronage; the twelfth-century romances, the development of politikos stikhos, the popularity of Digenes Akrites are all attractively explained by the demands of aristocratic patrons whose education (for whatever reason) was not up to the standards of the literary circles they moved and were expected to move in.<sup>95</sup>

Then again, there has been a great deal of discussion of a new professional class of writers in the twelfth century, closer to artisans than to the court, who would be more susceptible to the pressures of patronage than the Beamtenliteraten of an earlier age.<sup>96</sup> There were freelance writers and kept poets and pensioners, but in general I am quite sure that the origins of writers were quite disparate and they were employed in various occupations. Professionalism in writing may have been born in the twelfth-century - but it failed to catch on - or caught on only at a literary level, in an increased sense of corporate awareness of what it was to be a writer: this perhaps might be the explanation of the begging poems of a Prodromos.<sup>97</sup> It seems to me that a great deal of what is new in twelfth-century literature can be explained by patronage, but a great deal can only be explained within individual writers or within a corporate set of values, perhaps encouraged by the theatra. Noble ladies with Western connexions might have commissioned the twelfth-century romances for reasons of their own, but only the astelotes of a group alive to rhetorical kompsa would have fully appreciated the contemporary allusions and parody contained in them. The satire boom (although the Philopatris is now placed in the tenth century),<sup>98</sup> the literary parody in Skhedê muos and Katomyomakhia,<sup>99</sup> the taste for mock debates (Demetrios Tornikes put Niketas Choniates up to defending the superiority of winter over summer),<sup>100</sup> riddles, poems thick with quotations for one's friends to identify and the new schedography,<sup>101</sup> not so much a way of teaching grammar, more a tortuous game: all these are symptoms of the same phenomenon. Three of the four writers of novels incidentally produced a schedographical work, and the last produced a collection of riddles.<sup>102</sup> And, as Alexander Kazhdan has shown, there may be no need to seek outside Byzantium at this time for the origins of a taste for romance.<sup>103</sup>

Perhaps the mistake we have been making is to look for institutions rather than individuals and relationships between individuals. Professor Browning wrote: 'The more one examines Byzantine literature, the more one becomes convinced that it never appears spontaneously: it needs a salon, patronage, institutionalised forms'.<sup>104</sup> To some extent this is clearly true, but the arbitrary arrangement of such forms by modern scholars leads to distortions. To place Michael Italikos in the circle of the Patriarchal Academy while his associate Theodore Prodromos is assigned to the circle of the Sebastokratorissa Eirene seems ludicrous. I wonder whether a more writer-centred analysis might not provide more helpful results. Rather than rely on the flimsy evidence for theatra and clumsy groupings together of protégés, we should perhaps turn to the writers themselves and try to work out the links among them; only then can we see if they fall into any clear grouping.

This is clearly not the place for such an ambitious exercise. What is needed is nothing less than a complete network analysis<sup>105</sup> of

the writers of the period, together with their literary connections. Only this will give us the dynamics of literary society. We need to establish connections among writers and their public, connexions of family, education, acquaintance, patronage and friendship, and then we can really begin to see what made literary society function, and we will find that we have done in fact what Bowersock counselled us against: we shall have begun to flesh out our ghostly theatra with real groupings of real writers with real careers - and will then no longer need to have recourse to such question-begging terms as 'literary circle'.

It must be admitted that a great deal of groundwork still has to be done before such an analysis is possible. It involves the whole process of establishing exactly what was written and what survives over the whole period, together with complex problems of authorship and date, particularly with the rhetorical and poetic material. And the student, despite the publication of the new series of Handbücher,<sup>106</sup> still has to complete this collection of material for himself. Yet the material is extraordinarily useful for our enterprise: clearly not every literary work will yield some kind of information of a social kind, but some kinds of sources are more useful than others. The social importance of rhetoric has recently been emphasised: Lemerle speaks of the 'cultural qualification' of rhetoric;<sup>107</sup> Ševčenko sees rhetoric as 'a distinctive badge either of membership of the upper class or association with it', 'without rhetoric no-one was able to succeed in life'.<sup>108</sup> It becomes clear that literacy<sup>109</sup> is no indicator at all in our task of defining literary society: what is at stake is 'rhetoricity'; the ability to understand and derive entertainment<sup>110</sup> or instruction from, whether visually or aurally,<sup>111</sup> works written at the lowest in middle style, and for most in high style.<sup>112</sup> This is the minimum entrance fee for membership of the society. Not all its members need have understood all the nuances, or been able to practise them themselves, but a minimum appreciation - and therefore education - was necessary. The Comnenian period gives us an unrivalled opportunity, for while the number of significant writers is fairly limited, there is a great mass of rhetorical material (not all published) which will allow us to construct sequences and indicate connections.<sup>113</sup> Funeral orations, while heavily rhetorical and ceremonial, at least indicate the connection of speaker and the dead and may throw considerable light on the career of the dead; monodies afforded more opportunity for personal reaction, but were traditionally offered to those who died young and may thus automatically exclude members of literary society;<sup>114</sup> basilikoi logoi<sup>115</sup> and inaugural lectures<sup>116</sup> quite apart from their topical value allow us to reconstruct sequences of officials and individual careers. And it is a period when writers practised in several genres: to look only at the historians many were as well or better known for work other than history: Zonaras for his canonical work, Glykas for his exegesis, Kinnamos for his progymnasmata and so on. We are surely dealing with a profoundly interconnected literary society, not a series of disconnected publics. With this evidence we have a good chance of drawing up fairly complete tables of active writers and the genres in which they practised, their families, education and careers and a parallel register of passive literati, or the people with whom they had literary relationships. We need to arrive at criteria for deciding that X taught Y and for estimating the importance of such teaching links. We may

then produce network diagrams of the interrelationships of patronage, kinship, teaching and acquaintanceship, which will show us isolated figures and those with complex links, and we can begin to set this picture against our general understanding of social changes over the period.

In addition we need to gain some idea of the quality of relationships among our literati. Certain basic relationships may be hard to fathom: pupils and spiritual sons are notoriously difficult to disentangle.<sup>117</sup> And when we reach the difficult ground of intimacy, we will find that far and away the most useful genre is the letter. It brings its own difficulties with it: quite apart from the problem of whether there were close relationships in Byzantine society,<sup>118</sup> those who have worked with letters are well aware of the illusory charge of intimacy the genre brings with it: 'a kindly, diplomatic and charitable man like Peter the Venerable seems to be on terms of close friendship with everyone in Christendom'.<sup>119</sup> And it is always hard on literati who have left no letter-collection, or one inadequately collected.<sup>120</sup>

But like no other source letters show up just like a stain on a microscope slide the social and ceremonial relations of individuals. I believe that it is possible, by a minute analysis<sup>121</sup> of such variables as forms of address,<sup>122</sup> length, level of style, subject-matter and general tone, to establish gradations of intimacy over a single correspondence. Of course, there are the barriers of protocol and of literary form; they have to be negotiated with care, not jumped, but the student who learns to find his way through them may also have access to a three-dimensional view of literary society.

Having built up this picture of literary society we should then be able to determine what made it work, and answer many of the questions we have been posing above. How important was the family? Precisely, who was educated? In what offices were the ablest intellectuals to be found? How useful to a brilliant career in administration was membership of literary society? What proportion of writers were employed as writers? And to what extent were writers otherwise employed thought of as writers rather than officials or clerics? Were patrons members of theatra? How far down did a rhetorical education go? To what extent did regional loyalties establish themselves towards the end of the period? What effect did politics have on literature? Did literary circles become more closed towards the end of the period? How far did the Fourth Crusade disrupt patterns of literary and social behaviour? And indeed, what was the social basis of Comnenian literature?

This is clearly not the only way forward, and it necessarily entails many others. Detailed combing of the sources is bound to turn up a much richer documentation of theatra and patrons. Continued investigation into manuscripts and the relationship of works within manuscripts, together with work on their ownership may well make us rethink our views on readership, just as an awareness of recent work on the strength of orality in the Medieval West<sup>123</sup> may make us more alive to the effect of aural reception of Byzantine literature. I have suggested that we need to examine very closely with the help of students of other forms of patronage the precise nature of Comnenian patronage. We cannot do this without further work on what Kazhdan

calls 'social localization'; his devastatingly exhaustive 'Attaleiates'<sup>124</sup> is an example to all, while Paul Magdalino has alerted us to the equally important question of what writers thought was their social position. If above I appear to have dismissed too lightly the Stilstufen approach, I should echo here the words of Ševčenko: 'Relating levels of style to social and educational levels of the writers and their reading or listening public is among the most challenging tasks of our discipline. As yet we have only begun to look for solutions but we do see the problems.'<sup>125</sup>

Social localization has so far been practised largely on writers, for the obvious reason that they provide us with the information. A great deal of the groundwork has been done, and not just in individual cases: a great deal of counting has gone on in recent years. Lemerle's all-too attractive figures for the tenth century,<sup>126</sup> Kazdan's figures in People and Power, Beck's in Der byzantinische Jahrtausend, Ševčenko's admirable analysis of fourteenth-century literati<sup>127</sup> all attempt to quantify literary society. There are obvious dangers in working with autobiographical material, which they have mostly skirted: Ševčenko warns us of the tendency of twelfth-century writers to play down their social origins, as if, as quite recently, a working-class background was de rigueur for aspiring literati. Magdalino warns us of the opposite: they are closer to the people, he suggests, than they care to admit.<sup>128</sup> We should beware of any too easy identification of intellectuals with the aristocracy, even the aristocracy of taste, while in a highly mobile society it seems unhelpful to place too much emphasis on origins: the symposium seemed to agree very well that aristocracy depended not so much on where you came from as where you got to. The Jeffreys in their headcount of writers given at the symposium and not published here, modelled very much on Ševčenko's for the fourteenth century, emphasised this common ground by basing their assessment of social position on the rank at which a writer ended his career.

Their results, based on 122 writers of 198 works, tally very closely with my own researches based on a sample of 100 'positive' literati.<sup>129</sup> Of these, an overwhelming proportion, two-thirds of the sample, are ecclesiastical; bishops alone account for over one-third, and together with patriarchs make up one-half. Teachers (including higher education) come next, closely followed by civil officials, then ecclesiastical officials and royalty. Freelance writers and 'kept poets' are a tiny minority, at about the level of soldiers, doctors and secretaries. There are several reasons why the proportion of ecclesiastics may be exaggerated: for one thing their career is easy to identify, and so they find their way easily into any sample, second, appointment to a see or the tonsure could be the acme or the close of many varied careers;<sup>130</sup> finally, certain writings are determined by career, and everyone knows that the largest body of Comnenian literature is religious polemic. But 55% of Ševčenko's sample were ecclesiastic, so it is possible that my figures are not distorted after all.

Writer-centred analysis is all very well, but to get a balanced picture of literary society, we need to go further and carry out a similar study of the receivers as well as the producers of literature. If all dedicatees, commissioners, addressees of speeches and letters, or people mentioned in poems are added together, they should

Constitute the public for 'Comnenian literature'. And producers and receivers, 'positive' and 'negative', 'active' and 'passive' literati should all together constitute Comnenian literary society.

Again it is premature to attempt a final headcount of receivers: far greater problems of prosopography arise where we have not the benefit of autobiographical information, however misleading. But there are certain pointers from a pilot study. Taking a similar sample of 100 'negative' literati, the same careers are represented, but with marked shifts of emphasis. The largest single category is now civil officials, followed by patriarchs (swollen of course by the traditional Lazarus Saturday speech), royalty, not including emperors, then a considerable drop before bishops, at less than half and monks at less than a quarter of their 'positive' showing. On the other hand, the showing of ecclesiastical officials is very much the same, though low, and soldiers, doctors, lower clergy and grammatikoi are notably more strongly represented than in the 'positive' listing and have not been counted twice. The low monastic showing may well be a result of lack of opportunity (to receive personal letters, or to commission works of art), or of survival ('positive' monastic literati may have had their works preserved for pious reasons, but letters to obscure monks may not have been prestigious enough for authors to wish to preserve). Clearly speculation could be rife on this and other issues, but it would be safer to wait for hard results. What is clear, surely, is that the same categories of occupation or rank are represented in both counts: there is no question of 'rupture'<sup>131</sup> between the producers and receivers of literature in the Comnenian age.

So with this clearer picture, however imprecise, of the composition of Comnenian literary society, we may perhaps return to the questions that we posed at the beginning. We discarded 'who paid for Comnenian literature?' as an insufficiently subtle tool for measuring the complex issues of patronage, commission and professionalism raised by it. In our understanding of the social base of Byzantine literature, patronage is not all, nor is it all to our understanding of the processes of reception, not in any assessment of the contribution of the Comnenian aristocracy to the literature of the period. We have seen that the composition of literary society in the twelfth century, while varied in origin, was remarkably homogeneous and intricately interconnected. While I am aware that there is no such thing as a single homogeneous reading or listening public,<sup>132</sup> Comnenian conditions are suitable for the application of Goldmann's approach in Le dieu caché, where there is far more than a minimal consensus,<sup>133</sup> or to put it another way, where the horizon of expectation<sup>134</sup> is common to the whole of a work's readers 'in the historical moment of its appearance'.<sup>135</sup> In a far more real sense than that of the 'implied reader',<sup>136</sup> 'inscribed reader'<sup>137</sup> or 'narratee'<sup>138</sup> of modern literary criticism, Comnenian literature, its producers and receivers, were part of a single social organism.

It only remains to ask how aristocratic was this literary society. And by now we have learnt to be wary of easy answers. It is noticeable how often scholars refer to terms like 'élite'<sup>139</sup> or 'upper class'<sup>140</sup> rather than 'aristocracy' while treating of literature. And one really needs to have digested this present volume, with its sophisticated discussions of definitions, before tackling

this final problem. It might seem an easy solution to take each individual member of literary society as we have defined it and look him or her up in Kazhdan's Sostav,<sup>141</sup> the Debrett of the Comnenian world, but this might seem to lay too much stress on aristocracy of birth rather than that of wealth or rank or profession or taste. Other techniques might be equally onesided. We certainly cannot opt out by assuming that anyone who has made it to our 'literary society' has automatically made it to the aristocracy: that would be to fall into the intellectuals' own trap. By the same token it is useless to adopt the standards of Comnenian ideology and measure literary society like synodal lists by closeness of kinship to the emperor.

At any rate we can now discard most of the foreign analogies which are so often used by Byzantine literary society. At this period at least, literary society is hardly predominantly mandarin if by that is meant the civil bureaucracy and the patriarchal archontes. It cannot be a caste society, since higher clergy predominate and thus rule out the hereditary principle<sup>142</sup> - in any case mobility seems the keynote of this period. And a literary society so intricately inter-connected with very few sub-groups is hardly a matter of coteries, though one should not rule out the effects of literary friendships. I suspect also that twelfth-century literature is a far more complex matter than the lowbrow tastes of the court satisfied by highly educated but essentially artisan writers. (Here parallels with the visual arts may be less than helpful). It was more aristocratic than we might have imagined in the sense that a wider range of aristocratic society is represented: it found room for the less-than-top-drawer Kekaumenos, whose rhetoricity should not be underestimated,<sup>143</sup> as well as for smart military families. The civil aristocracy, even if we believe in a sharp distinction, did not have a monopoly. Robert Browning in his fundamental article on literacy writes as if soldiers were unlikely to have had a rhetorical training<sup>144</sup> - but we know from the letters of teachers to their ex-pupils that some did.<sup>145</sup> On the other hand, a great deal of twelfth-century literary activity was carried on independently of the court, and writers were not just its voice. To that extent literary society was less aristocratic than it has been pictured.

We might settle then for this rather unsatisfactory hypothesis that Comnenian literary society was both more and less aristocratic than has been thought - but of course no hypothesis is any substitute for the hard work which remains to be done.

# NOTES

1. This mirrors the conviction of historians, e.g. M. Angold, *A Byzantine Government in Exile* (Oxford, 1975), p. 141 ff., and M.F. Hendy, *Coinage and Money in the Byzantine Empire 1081-1261* (Washington D.C., 1969), p. 320, that there was no economic or social cut-off at 1204: the importance of the period of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries was emphasised again and again in Paul Magdalino's discussion group at the Birmingham symposium in 1983.
2. For the 'Helladic connexion' which bound together the influential group of twelfth-century clerics which comprised the Tornikai, Euthymios Malakes, Michael Choniates and John Apokaukos, see J. Darrouzès, 'Notes sur Euthyme Tornikès, Euthyme Malakès et Georges Tornikès', *REB*, 23(1965), pp. 148-167, esp. p. 162. The cut-off surely comes with the last of these literati to be educated in Constantinople: George Bardanes, a pupil of Michael Choniates at Athens, appears to be the first of a new province-centred group.
3. P. Lemerle, *Prolegomènes à une édition critique et commentée des 'Conseils et Récits' de Kekauménos* (Académie royale de Belgique, classe des lettres, mémoires, 54, 1, Brussels, 1960), p. 95: 'littérature sans public et sans problèmes'; R. Jenkins, 'The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Literature', *DOP*, 17 (1963), p. 40: 'no secular literature was written for a wide public, since no such public existed'.
4. E.g. C. Mango, *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror* (Oxford, 1975).
5. E.g. H.-G. Beck, *Das literarische Schaffen der Byzantiner. Wege zu seinem Verständnis* (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, 294, 4. Abhandlung, Vienna, 1974).
6. R. Browning, 'Enlightenment and Repression in Byzantium in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Past and Present*, 69(1975), p.5.
7. H. Hunger, 'Die byzantinische Literatur der Komnenenzeit: Versuch einer Neubewertung', *Anzeiger der philologische-historischen Klasse der österreichischen Akademie*, 105 (1968), pp. 59-76.
8. For the Christos Paschon, see M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 64; for an early date, see A. Tuilier, *Grégoire de Nazianze, La Passion de Christ, tragédie* (Sources chrétiennes, 149, Paris, 1969), pp. 11-74. Hunger in 'On the Imitation (MIMESIS) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature', *DOP*, 23/24 (1969-70), p. 34 ff., takes it for granted that it is a twelfth-century work. For Digenes, see N. Oikonomidès, 'L'épopée de Digènes et la frontière orientale de Byzance au X<sup>e</sup> et XI<sup>e</sup> siècle', *TM*, 7 (1979), pp. 375-97; E. Jeffreys, 'The Comnenian Background to the "romans d'antiquité"', *B*, 50 (1980), pp. 455-86; R. Beaton, 'Was Digenes Akrites an oral poem?', *BMGS*, 7(1981), pp. 7-27; idem, 'Digenes Akrites and Modern Greek folksong: a reassessment', *B*, 51 (1981), 23-43. On the Belisarius romance, see the PhD thesis of Maria Fotina, *A Critical Edition of the Medieval Greek Poems on Belisarius* (London, 1973).
9. E.g. H. Hunger, *Prooimion: Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiser-idee in den Arengen der Urkunden* (Wiener byzantinische Studien, 1, Vienna, 1964); 'Aspekte der griechischen Rhetorik von Gorgias bis zum Untergang von Byzanz', *Sitzungsberichte der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse*, 277, Abh. 3 (Vienna, 1972); 'The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Literature: the Importance of Rhetoric', *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, ed. M. Mullett and R. Scott (Birmingham, 1981), pp. 35-47.
10. E.g. R. Browning, 'The Patriarchal School at Constantinople in the Twelfth Century', *B* 32(1962), pp. 167-201; *B* 33(1963), pp. 11-40; 'Byzantine Scholarship', *Past and Present*, 28(1964), pp. 3-22.
11. E.g. J. Darrouzès, *Documents inédits d'ecclésiologie byzantine* (Archives de l'orient chrétien, 10, Paris, 1966); *Recherches sur les offikia de l'église byzantine* (Archives de l'orient chrétien, 11, Paris, 1970).
12. E.g. A.P. Kazhdan, *Social'ny sostav gosподstvujushchego klassa Vizantii XI-XII vv* (Moscow, 1974); A. Hohlweg, *Beiträge zur Verwaltungsgeschichte des oströmischen Reiches unter den Komnenen* (Miscellanea Byzantina Monacensia, 1, Munich, 1965); A.P. Kazhdan, review of P. Lemerle, *Cinq études sur le XI<sup>e</sup> siècle byzantin* (Paris, 1977) in *B* 49 (1979), pp. 491-503, at p. 498ff.
13. See E.M. and M.J. Jeffreys, *Popular Literature in Late Byzantium* (London, 1983), and 'On the Rise of Vernacular Literatures of the Middle Ages', 'The Literary Emergence of Vernacular Greek'. *Mosaic*, 8/4, (1975) pp. 171-93; for Stilstufen, H. Hunger, 'Stilstufen in der byzantinischen Geschichtsschreibung des 12. Jahrhunderts: Anna Komnene und Michael Glykas', *Byzantine Studies Etudes byzantines*, 5(1978), 139-170 and his Anonyme Metaphrase zu Anna Komnene Alexias XII-XIII. Ein Beitrag zur Erschliessung byzantinischer Umgangssprache (Wiener Byzantinische Studien, 15, Vienna, 1981). For social standing and author's self-perception, see A.P. Kazhdan, 'Der Mensch in der byzantinischen Literaturgeschichte', *JÖBG*, 28 (1979), pp. 1-21, and Magdalino above Chapter 4, pp.58ff.
14. The inaugural lecture of C. Mango, see above n. 4, acted as a powerful stimulus to scholars who could not accept the disparaging judgements of that lecture and of R. Jenkins in *Dionysius Solomos* (Cambridge, 1940), p. 57. Already Hunger's *MIMESIS*, see n. 8 and G.L. Kustas, *Studies in Byzantine Rhetoric* (Analekta Blatadon, 17, Thessalonike, 1973), had proposed an alternative aesthetic. Margaret Alexiou's work on narrative technique (in 'A Critical Reappraisal of Eustathius Makrembolites' *Hysmine and Hysminias*', *BMGS*, 3 (1977), 23-43) and on irony (see her study of the *Timarion* in *BMGS* 8(1983), pp.29-45)

- are designed to show the literary qualities of Byzantine literature, and several contributions to Byzantium and the Classical Tradition were designed to show development in Byzantine literature and its independence of classical models. With the literary discussion at the Birmingham Symposium 1983 and the appearance of A.P. Kazhdan and S. Franklin, Studies on Byzantine Literature of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries (Cambridge, 1984) the wind of change is quite apparent.
15. F. Chalandon, Jean II et Manuel I Comnène, II.1, Paris, 1912, repr. New York, 1971), e.g. pp. 14, 213.
  16. R. Browning, 'An Unpublished Funeral Oration on Anna Comnena', Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society, 188 (n.s.8, 1962), p.7.
  17. M. Innes, The Ampersand Papers (Harmondsworth, 1980), p. 19.
  18. G. Bowersock, Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire (Oxford, 1969), ch. 8, pp. 101-9. Other classical circles under suspicion at the moment are those of Scipio Aemilianus, see J.E.G. Zetzel, 'Cicero and the Scipionic Circle', Harvard Studies in Classical Philology, 76(1972), pp. 173-9, and of Symmachus, see A. Cameron, 'The Date and Identity of Macrobius', JRS, 56(1966), pp. 33-38. I am grateful to Oliver Nicholson and Marie Taylor Davis for suggesting these parallels and discussing them with me.
  19. Bowersock, op. cit., p. 101.
  20. H. Hunger, Reich der neuen Mitte (Graz, Vienna and Cologne, 1965), p. 341.
  21. See Synesius, ep. 101, ed. R. Hercher, Epistolographi Graeci (Paris, 1873), p. 698; Manuel II, epp. 9, 24, 27, 32, 34, 44, 61, ed. G.T. Dennis (Washington D.C., 1977), pp. 25, 37, 87, 95, 119, 171 and see Hunger, loc. cit.
  22. Theophylact, epp. Vat II, Meurs VIII, Vat V, Migne, PG 126, cols 309, 372-3, 317.
  23. Ed. G.A. Hirschig, Scriptores Erotici Graeci, II (Paris, 1859), pp. 161-286 at p. 161. Margaret Alexiou first suggested this to me; I find a similar note in Hunger, Anzeiger phil-hist. Klasse der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 105 (1968), pp. 73-4.
  24. Ed. P. Gautier, Michel Italikos, Lettres et Discours (Paris, 1972), p. 154.
  25. ibid., no. 15, pp. 146-7.
  26. ibid., p. 147.
  27. ibid., no. 11, p. 86.
  28. Ed. J. Darrouzès, Georges et Démétrios Tornikès, Lettres et Discours (Paris, 1970), no. 14, p. 255 ll. 11, 38 ff.
  29. Esc. Gr. Y-11-10, fol. 324<sup>r</sup> ff. I am extremely grateful to Paul Magdalino for offering me his transcript and to him and Roger Scott for discussing the passage with me.
  30. Niketas Stethatos, Bios kai Politeia tou en agiois patros êmôn Symeon tou neou Theologou presbyterou êgoumenou monês tou agiou Mamantos tês Xenokerkliou, ch. 100, 109, ed. I. Hausherr, (OC 12, Rome, 1928), pp. 138, 142; Vita Basilii Junioris, ch. 21, AASS, March III, pp. 20-32. I owe these references (and much else) to Rosemary Morris. See above, R. Morris, Chapter 7, pp. 112ff.
  31. cf. Wilson, Byzantine Books and Bookmen, p. 13.
  32. E.g. Theophylact of Ochrid, Paideia Basilikê, ed. P. Gautier, Theophylacti Achridensis Orationes, Tractatus, Carmina (Thessalonike, 1980), p. 183, line 18.
  33. See the interesting suggestions on the relationship between orally received literature, patronage and art in H. Maguire, Art and Eloquence in Byzantium (Princeton, 1981), pp. 109-111.
  34. Benjamin of Tudela, ed. tr. M.N. Adler (London, 1907), p. 13ff.; Odo of Deuil, ed. tr. G.J. McLeod (Columbia, 1948), p. 65 ff; see also S. Runciman, 'Blachernae Palace and its Decoration', Studies in Memory of D. Talbot Rice (Edinburgh, 1975), pp. 277-83; P. Magdalino, 'Manuel Komnenos and the Great Palace', BMGS, 4 (1978), pp. 101-114; see above, L.-A. Hunt, Chapter 8, pp. 138 ff.
  35. See L. Stiernon's brilliant series, 'Notes de prosopographie et de titulature byzantine' REB, 17(1959), pp. 90-126; 19(1961), pp. 273-83; 21(1963), pp. 173-98; 23(1965), pp. 223-43; 24(1966), pp. 89-96; N. Oikonomidès, 'L'évolution de l'organisation administrative de l'empire byzantin au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle 1025-1118', TM 6(1976), pp. 125-152 at pp. 151-2. I have elsewhere, BS, 45 (1984), n. 57 expressed reservations about the use of the term.
  36. E.g. in N. Kataskepenos, Bios kai Politeia kai Merikê Thaumaton Diêgêsis tou Osiou Patros êmôn Kyriellou tou Phileottou, ch. 47, ed. E. Sargologos (Subsidia Hagiographica, 39, Brussels, 1964), pp. 225-35.
  37. On ceremonial see W. Hörandner, Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte (Wiener byzantinische Studien, 11, Vienna, 1974), pp. 79-88; on jousting, S. Lampros, 'Ekphrasis tôn xylokontariôn tou kratalou kai hagiou hêmôn authentou kai basileôs', Neos Hellênismos, 5 (1908), pp. 3-18.
  38. Contrast Anna's picture of Alexius and Theodore Prodromos's of John with Niketas Choniates's less idealised view of Manuel's life-style. For suburban life see Chalandon, Les Comnènes, II.1, pp. 236 ff; for anakainesis C. Mango, 'The Conciliar



Edict of 1166, *DOP*, 17(1963), pp. 315-30.

39. For Alexius, see his *Ekdotheis par autou pros Armenious doxazontas kakôs mian physin epi Christô*, ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Analekta Ierosolymitika*, I (St Petersburg 1891), pp. 116-23; Mousai, ed. P. Maas, *Die Musen des Kaisers Alexios*, *BZ*, 22(1913), pp. 48-69. On the identity of the Sebastokrator see Hörandner, *Poésie profane au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle et la connaissance des auteurs anciens*, *TM*, 6(1976), n. 55. For editions, see J.J. Rizzo, *Isaac Sebastokrator, Peri tês kakôn hypostaseôs* (Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, 42, Meisenheim am Glan, 1971), and J. Dornseiff, *Isaak Sebastokrator, Zehn Aporien über die Vorsehung*, (Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie, 19, Meisenheim am Glan, 1966).
40. I. Ševčenko, 'Society and Intellectual Life in the Fourteenth Century', *Actes du XI<sup>e</sup> Congrès international Des Études byzantines I* (Bucharest, 1974), pp. 69-92 at pp. 79-83.
41. This is not to quarrel with the view that there was 'a consistent dynastic policy to display imperial magnificence to the full', see P. Magdalino and R. Nelson, 'The Emperor in Byzantine Art of the Twelfth Century', *Byzantinische Forschungen*, 8 (1982), pp. 123-83, at p. 170, an excellent and exhaustive study which underlines the relationship between official art and official literature, together with the special case of Manuel I, without portraying either a court art or a court literature.
42. Ed. L. Sternbach, *Nicolai Calliclis Carmina*, *Rosprawy Akademii Umiejetnosci Wydział Filologiczny* (Cracow, 1904), pp. 335-92. The new edition, *Nicola Callicle, Carmi* by R. Romano (Naples, 1980) had not reached me when I completed this paper.
43. Euthymios Zigabenos, *Panoplia Dogmatikê*, Minge, PG 130; Stephen Physopalamites, ed. C. Welz, *Analekta Byzantina, Carmina Inedita* (Diss., Leipzig, 1910), pp. 54-9; John Kamateros, *Eisagôgê Astronomias*, ed. F. Wiegand (Leipzig and Berlin, 1908); Michael Glykas, ed. E. Legrand, *Bibliothèque de grec vulgaire*, I, pp. 18-37. Obvious additions are Ptochoprodromos poems I and IV, ed. D.C. Hesseling and H. Pernot, *Poèmes prodromiques en grec vulgaire* (Amsterdam, 1910), pp. 30-7; 72-83; Manganeios Prodromos, poems III-XII, ed. S. Bernardinello (Università di Padova, *Studi biz. e neogreci*, 4, Padua, 1972), pp. 36-80.
44. No. 18, ed. Gautier, p. 155-9.
45. See N. Wilson, 'Books and Readers in Byzantium', *Byzantine Books and Bookmen* (Washington, D.C., 1975), p. 6.
46. Browning, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philosophical Society*, 188 (1962), p. 7.
47. For Basilakes see the studies of A. Garzya, *Storia e interpretazione di testi bizantini* (London, 1974), esp. VIII, IX, X, XI, XII.

48. See R. Browning, 'O Markianos Ellênikos Kodikos XI.3 kai e Byzantine Schedographia', *Parnassos*, n.s. 14(1973), pp. 506-19.
49. Note for example that the introduction of a recent work on Roman literary patronage views literary patronage and patronage of a salon as mutually exclusive and successive phases of support for the arts: 'In the nineteenth and early twentieth century patronage was frequently replaced by literary circles gathered round a central artistic or literary figure like Gertrude Stein', B.K. Gold, ed. *Literary and Artistic Patronage in Ancient Rome* (Austin, Texas, 1982), p. xi.
50. For greater detail see my forthcoming 'The "Disgrace" of the Ex-basilissa Maria', *BS*, 45, (1984).
51. Browning, *Past and Present*, 69(1975), 3-23; L. Glucas, *The Trial of John Italos* (Byzantina Monacensia, 26, Munich, 1981).
52. See my 'Maria', *BS*, 45(1984), notes 5-7.
53. Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, III. viii.3, ed. B. Leib, I (Paris, 1967), p. 126; see S. Runciman's suggestive 'The End of Anna Dalassena', *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientale et slave*, 9(1949), pp. 517-24.
54. Zonaras (Bonn), III, p. 747; P. Gautier, 'L'obituaire du typikon du Pantokrator', *REB*, 27(1969), pp. 235-62 at 245-7.
55. Nicephorus Bryennios, *Hylê Historias*, Prooimion, ed. P. Gautier (Brussels, 1973), p. 71; Anna Comnena, *Alexiad*, Prooimion, ed. Leib, I, pp. 5-6. A certain amount of caution is advisable in view of the frequency of such claims in historical introductions.
56. Nicholas Kataskepênos, epp. ed. M. Gedeon, *Archeion ekklesiastikês historias*, 1(1911), pp. 60-2; 70-2. Theophylact's ep. Meurs LII to the despoina who visited him in his illness is taken by D. Polemis, *The Doukai, a Contribution to Byzantine Prosopography* (University of London Historical Studies, 22, London, 1968), p. 73 to be Eirene. We await Gautier's new edition.
57. Nicholas Kallikles, poems 2, 7, ed. Sternbach, pp. 319, 341-2; Manuel Straboromanos, *consolatio*, ed. P. Gautier, 'Le dossier de Manuel Straboromanos', *REB*, 23(1965), pp. 168-204 at 195-201; Theodore Prodromos, ed. Hörandner, pp. 185-8.
58. Browning, *art. cit.* (n. 46) 6-10.
59. Chalandon, *Les Comnènes*, II.2, pp. 213; Papadimitriu, *Feodor Prodrom* (Odessa, 1905), pp. 24-7.
60. E.M. Jeffreys, *B* 50(1980), 455-86; 'The Sevastokratorissa Eirene as Literary Patroness: the Monk Iakovos', *JÖB* 32/1 (1982), pp. 63-71 (= *Atken des XVI. internationaler Byzantinistenkongress*, 11/3); see below E.M. Jeffreys, Chapter 11, pp. 202-10.

61. See M.J. Jeffreys, 'The Nature and Origins of the Political Verse', *DOP*, 28(1974), pp. 141-95, esp. 148-76.
62. See S. Suleiman and I. Crosman, *The Reader in the Text, Essays in Audience and Interpretation* (Princeton, 1980), for an anthology of audience-centred criticism. Western mediaevalists have long been aware of the problem, e.g. D. Whitelock, *The Audience of Beowulf* (Oxford, 1957) and in general seem happy to deduce audience from internal evidence; see J. Coleman, *English Literature in History 1350-1400. Medieval Readers and Writers* (London, 1981), pp. 18-26, e.g. p. 20: 'If Chaucer, as is commonly believed, wrote for the court circle whose literary tastes were French, why did he write in English?'. Cf. A. Kazhdan and G. Constable, *People and Power in Byzantium. An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies* (Washington, D.C., 1982), p. 102.
63. An exception is the intelligent and subtle treatment by R. Beaton in his *Folk Poetry of Modern Greece* (Cambridge, 1980), esp. pp. 179-92 and his studies of Digenes Akrites, see note 8.
64. Kazhdan, *People and Power*, p. 102 ff.; S.S. Averintsev, *Poetika rannevizantijskoj literatury* (Moscow, 1977), pp. 183-209. I must thank Natalia Teteriatnikov for her help with this book.
65. R. Crosby, 'Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages', *Speculum*, 11(1936), pp. 88-110; M. Curschmann, 'Oral Poetry in Medieval English, French and German Literature: some notes on recent research', *Speculum*, 42(1967), pp. 36-52.
66. On the persistence of mimes, see F. Tinnefeld, 'Zum profanen Mimos in Byzanz nach dem Verdikt des Trullianums (691)', *Byzantina*, 6(1974), pp. 323-43. It is usually stated that the *dramatía* of the twelfth century, e.g. Theodore Prodromos, *Epi Apodê mou tē Philia*, Minge, PG 133, cols. 1321-32, were not intended for performance - but there is no evidence either way. At Edinburgh the Jeffreys suggested that some of the *epithalamia* of the period resemble masques.
67. Publicity: cf the remarks of T.P. Wiseman, '"Pete nobiles amicos". Poets and Patrons in Late Roman Rome', ed. Gold, *Literary and Artistic Patronage*, pp. 28-49 at p.38. For him what Roman patrons offered poets was an assured audience, a clique, and if worst came to worst effective bouncers. Sharing: cf. M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record. England 1066-1307* (London 1979), p. 198: 'Books were scarce and it was ordinary good manners to share their contents among a group by reading aloud'. Editing: E. Auerbach, *Literatursprache und Publikum in der lateinischen Spätantike und im Mittelalter* (Bern, 1958).
68. H. Hunger, 'State and Society in Byzantium', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 82.c.8 (1982), p. 208; he clearly sees the *theatra* as more like music-halls than salons.
69. The eleventh-century revival of rhetoric passes unnoticed (unless in passing on p.304?) in G.A. Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (A History of Rhetoric, 3, Princeton, 1983), but is taken for granted in Kazhdan, *JOB* 28(1979), p. 15. Most useful work has been done by J. Lefort, 'Rhétorique et politique: trois discours de Jean Mauropous en 1047', *TM*, 6 (1976), pp. 265-303, to whom I am also indebted for a copy of his paper to the Athens congress, 'Rhétorique et symbolique: l'obscurité dans les discours à l'empereur au XI-XII siècles'. For further remarks see my 'Maria', *BS*, 45(1984), n. 48.
70. R. Browning, 'Literacy in the Byzantine World', *BMGS*, 4(1978), pp. 39-54; E. Patlagean, 'Discours écrit, discours parlé. Niveaux de culture à Byzance aux VIII<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècles', *Annales ESC*, 34(1979), 264-75; M. Mundell, 'Patrons and Scribes indicated in Syriac manuscripts 411-800 A.D.', *JOB* 32 (1982), pp. 3-12.
71. See C. Mango, 'Books in the Byzantine Empire A.D. 750-850', *Byzantine Books and Bookmen*, pp. 29-45 at p. 39; N. Wilson, *ibid.*, p. 3.
72. H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I (Munich, 1978), pp. 257-78).
73. M.J. Jeffreys, 'The Vernacular *elstêrioi* for Agnes of France', *Byzantine Papers*, ed. E. and M. Jeffreys and A. Moffatt (Byzantina Australensia, I, Canberra, 1981), pp. 101-115; H.G. Beck, 'Der Leserkreis der byzantinischen Volksliteratur im Licht der handschriftlichen Überlieferung', *Byzantine Books and Bookmen*, pp. 47-68 at p. 58: 'Eine Affäre literarischer Kreise'.
74. See above, n. 8.
75. I. Ševčenko, 'Additional Remarks to the Report on the Levels of Style', *JOB* 32/1 (1982), pp. 228-9.
76. On the literary implications of the appointment of literati to provincial bishoprics and the influx into Constantinople of *scholazontes* fleeing from the Turks see my 'Classical Tradition in the Byzantine Letter', *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, pp. 75-93 at p. 91.
77. e.g. Psellos, Anna Comnena, Zonaras, Kinnamos in our period.
78. For example J.E.G. Zetzel, 'The Poetics of Patronage in the Late First Century B.C.', ed. Gold, *Literary and Artistic Patronage*, pp. 87-102 at p. 88, reserves the term 'artistic patronage' for what he calls the 'Renaissance type'.
79. Michael Italikos, nos. 5, 33, ed. Gautier, pp. 97, 209, and see Gautier's discussion, pp. 20-1.
80. Theodore Prodromos, *Peri tou megalou kai tou mikrou, kai tou pollou kai tou oligou. Oti ou tōn pros ti eisin, alla tōu posōu, kai enantia*, ed. P. Tannery, *Annuaire de l'association pour l'encouragement des études grecques en France*, 21 (1887), pp. 104-19.
81. Zetzel, *loc. cit.*

82. See n. 50 above.
83. H. Buchthal and H. Belting, Patronage in Thirteenth-century Constantinople: an Atelier of Late Byzantine Book Illumination and Calligraphy (Washington D.C., 1978), pp. 99-100; see the reviews of A. Cutler in Speculum, 56(1981), pp. 100-5 and of G. Vikan, in Art Bulletin, 63(1981), pp. 325-8. I have always benefited enormously from Robin Cormack's historian's view of the production of art objects, (see his paper in this volume, chapter 9 pp. 158ff), and I should also like to thank Tony Cutler for the stimulus of discussion with him in the legendary 'favourable atmosphere' of Dumbarton Oaks in the spring of 1983.
84. P. White, 'Amicitia and the Profession of Poetry in Early Imperial Rome', JRS, 68 (1978), pp. 74-92 at pp. 82-84.
85. As I hope to argue in a forthcoming paper on philia. White is surely wrong in suggesting that amicitia is not patronage and right in emphasising the social (rather than strictly literary) nature of Early Imperial patronage of writers. In his more developed paper, 'Positions for Poets in Early Imperial Rome', ed. Gold, Literary and Artistic Patronage, pp. 50-66, literary skill appears as an important 'good or service' to exchange. But the patronage of literature in twelfth-century Byzantium was not necessarily organised under a similar model of personal patronage.
86. R. Saller, Personal Patronage under the Early Empire (Cambridge, 1982), p. 1, based on J. Boissevain, 'Patronage in Sicily', Man, n.s. 1(1966), p. 18; many definitions are offered in the excellent E. Gellner and J. Waterbury, Patrons and Clients in Mediterranean Societies (London, 1977).
87. Or at least miniaturists, see Buchthal and Belting, op.cit., p. 92; cf. Wilson on calligraphers, Byzantine Books and Bookmen, p. 9.
88. See Kazhdan, Studies, ch. 3. I am greatly indebted to Professor Kazhdan for the opportunity to read this work in typescript.
89. Paul Magdalino suggests that this is also true for the fourteenth century.
90. See Sternbach's edition (above, no. 42).
91. See Hörandner Theodoros Prodromos. The four poems are nos. 44-7, pp. 405-34.
92. For references see Jeffreys, DOP, 28 (1974), pp. 150 ff.
93. See R. Cormack, 'Painting after Iconoclasm', Iconoclasm, ed. A.A.M. Bryer and J. Herrin (Birmingham, 1977), pp. 147-163; A. Cutler, 'Art in Byzantine Society: Motive forces of Byzantine Patronage', (= Akten Des XVI. internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, 1/2). JÖB 31/2 (1981), 759-87.
94. Much of the concern of the second part of Gold, Literary and Artistic Patronage is to show that patrons did not dictate poetry, e.g. p. 101: 'it is not the poets who are the clients but the patrons'. Interestingly, E.W. Leach in the same volume is quite happy to posit patronal direction in the visual arts.
95. E.M. Jeffreys, B 50 (1980), pp. 45-86; JÖB, 32(1982), pp. 63-71; M.J. Jeffreys, DOP 28 (1974), pp. 41-95; Byzantine Papers (Canberra, 1981), pp. 101-115.
96. See Kazhdan, e.g. People and Power, p. 102; Ševčenko, art. cit. (n. 40), pp. 74-5; see above P. Magdalino, Chapter 4. For Beamtenliteraten see G. Weiss, Oströmische Beamte im Spiegel der Schriften des Michael Psellos (Miscellanea Monacensia, 16, Munich, 1973).
97. Note the caution of Hunger art. cit. (n. 68) p. 208. Begging-formulae appear in a wide variety of writings and seem characteristic of twelfth-century poetry in East and West. On the genre in the West, see N. Eliason, 'Two old English Scop poems', Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, 81(1966), pp. 185-92; 'Deor - A Begging-Poem?', Medieval Literature and Criticism. Studies in Memory of G.N. Garmonsway, ed. D.A. Pearsall and W.A. Waldron (London, 1969), pp. 55-61.
98. On the satire boom (which awaits exhaustive study) see Beck in Byzantine Books and Bookmen, p. 51 ff; C. Robinson, Lucian and his Influence in Europe (London, 1979), pp. 66-81; his study could have been augmented by a mere glance at the works of Theodore Prodromos listed by Hörandner, op.cit. pp. 49-51.
99. See Ševčenko, JÖB, 82(1982), p. 297; H. Hunger, Der byzantinische Katz-Mause-Krieg (Vienna, 1968).
100. See J.L. Van Dieten, Niketas Choniates. Erläuterungen zu den Reden und Briefen nebst einer Biographie (Berlin and New York, 1971), pp. 138-9.
101. A. Garzya, 'Literarische und rhetorische Polemiken der Komnenenzeit', BS, 34(1973), 1-14; G. Schirò, 'La schedografia a Bisanzio nel sec. XI-XII e la scuola dei SS XL Martiri', Bollettino della Badia di Grottaferrata, 3-4 (1949-50), pp. 11-29; Browning, Parnassos, n.s. 14 (1973), pp. 506-19; Lemerle, Cinq Études, pp. 235-41.
102. For Constantine Manasses and Niketas Eugenianos, see R. Browning, 'II Codice Marciano Gr. XI.31 e la schedografia bizantina', Miscellanea marciana di studi bessarionei (Medioevo e Umanesimo, 24, Padua, 1976), 21-34, at p. 26; for schedographical works ascribed to Theodore Prodromos, see Hörandner, op.cit., pp. 62-3; M. Treu, Eustathii Macrembolitae quae feruntur aenigmata (Progr. Friedr. Gymnas., Breslau, 1893).
103. Kazhdan, People and Power, p. 108; pp. 112-3.
104. Browning, art. cit. (n. 46) p. 8.

105. cf. J. Boissevain and J.C. Mitchell, Network Analysis. Studies in Human Interaction (The Hague and Paris, 1973).
106. Curiously in some ways the problem with Hunger's magisterial Hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner is not as Kazhdan suggests, JÖB 28 (1979), 1-21, that it is not a literary history as such, which it is not, but that it does not attempt to be a thorough-going Handbuch. It is selectively descriptive rather than exhaustively analytical.
107. Patlagean, Annales ESC, 34(1979), p. 267, referring to P. Lemerle, Le premier humanisme byzantin. Notes et remarques sur enseignement et culture à Byzance des origines au X<sup>e</sup> siècle (Paris, 1971), *passim*.
108. I. Ševčenko, 'Levels of Style in Byzantine Prose', JÖB 31/1 (1981), p. 302; *art.cit.* (n.40), p. 88, quoting George Lapithos.
109. Robert Browning in BMGS 4(1978), p. 40 makes a distinction between 'functional literacy' and 'the ability to manipulate the Atticising literary language and its complex universe of reference and allusion', similar to that of Malcolm Parkes, 'The Literacy of the Laity', The Medieval World, ed. D. Daiches and A. Thorlby (London, 1973), pp. 555-578, of 'pragmatic', 'cultivated' and 'professional'. It is interesting to note that the arguments of Parkes on cursive run parallel to those of Mango on minuscule, Byzantine Books and Bookmen, p.45. I am grateful to Pamela Robinson for her advice on Western literacy.
110. Entertainment is the forgotten factor. The Kataphloron piece suggests that members of the sylogos not only amused each other, i.e. in a theatron, but also clients in private houses, almost as if in succession to the professional entertainers signalled in Arethas's famous passage; see Beaton, BMGS 7(1981) p. 21.
111. The Jeffreys in their communication to the symposium reminded us that oral delivery with appropriate use of gesture may well have helped comprehension.
112. For definitions, as yet still impressionistic, if based on a lifetime's familiarity with the literature, see Ševčenko, JÖB, 31/1(1981), p. 291 ff.
113. I base all that follows on my unpublished thesis, Theophylact Through his Letters: The Two Worlds of an Exile Bishop (Birmingham, 1981), esp. Fig. II, pp. 814-847, which is a preliminary sketch of such a survey, which I hope to expand into a book on Comnenian literary society.
114. On the funeral genres, J. Soffel, Die Regeln Menanders für die Leichenrede in ihrer Tradition dargestellt, hrsg, übersetzt und kommentiert (Meisenheim am Glan, 1974); M. Alexiou, The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition (Cambridge, 1974) and my thesis III.2.
115. J. Lefort, see above, n. 69, and A.P. Kazhdan, introduction to W. Regel, Fontes Rerum Byzantinorum, Rhetorum saeculi XII orationes politicae, I 1-2, repr. (Leipzig, 1982), v-xviii.
116. R. Browning, 'A New Source on Byzantine-Hungarian Relations in the Twelfth Century. The Inaugural Lecture of Michael o tou Anchialou as hypatos tôn philosophôn', Balkan Studies, 2(1961), pp. 173-214; J. Lefort, 'Prooimion de Michel, neveu de l'archevêque de Thessalonique, didascale de l'Évangile', TM, 4(1970), 375-93.
117. A.P. Kazhdan, 'Bemerkungen zur Niketas Eugenianos', JÖB, 16(1967), 1-38; R. Morris, 'The Political Saint of the Eleventh Century', The Byzantine Saint, ed. S. Hackel (Studies supplementary to Sobornost, 5, London, 1981), pp. 43-50; my chapter II.2.
118. Kazhdan, People and Power, pp. 26-9 and my paper to the 1983 Birmingham Symposium.
119. C. Morey and C.N.L. Brooke, Gilbert Foliot and his Letters (Cambridge, 1965), p. 13.
120. For example in our period, Nicholas Kallikles, Niketas Eugenianos, Nicephorus Basilakes, Michael o tou Thessalonikes, Eustathios Makrembolites, Basil Padiadites, Nicephorus Chrysoberges, Demetrios Tornikes have left less than a dozen letters all told.
121. I hope shortly to publish a methodological study on the detection of relationship in Byzantine literary works.
122. H. Zilliacus, Untersuchungen zu den abstrakten Anredeformen und Höflichkeitstiteln im Griechischen (Helsingfors, 1953); L. Dineen, Titles of Address in Christian Greek Epistolography to 527 A.D. (Diss, Washington D.C., 1929); P. Koch, Die byzantinische Beamtentitel von 400-700 (Diss, Jena, 1903).
123. See Clanchy's discussion of the superiority of oral witness to documentation in the twelfth century and in particular his treatment of Edward I's Quo Warranto proceedings and the hilarious story of Anselm's dispute with Henry I, From Memory to Written Record, pp. 208 ff. and 21 ff. He reminds us, p. 97, that 'reading and dictating' were ordinarily coupled, not 'reading and writing'. Malcolm Parkes, *op.cit.* n. 109, instances Count Baldwin of Guines in the twelfth century who 'was extremely learned and possessed a splendid library but never learned to read: he had his books read to him by his clerici et magistri'. To indicate the clear importance of orality in Byzantium, Professor Kazhdan reminded me of the priest Michael in Michael Italikos, no. 1, ed. Gautier, p. 64, who had all the works of Theodore Prodromos by heart, and recited them to Italikos.
124. See Kazhdan, Studies, ch. 2.
125. Ševčenko, JÖB, 31/1 (1981) 312.

126. Lemerle, Premier humanisme, pp. 255-7. This has become the most attractive statistic of the decade, causing such crass remarks as B. Baldwin, 'Literature and Society in the Later Roman Empire', ed. Gold, Literary and Artistic Patronage, p. 79: 'This prefigures the situation in Byzantium where it has been calculated that only 300 or so people were receiving higher education at any given time, thus ensuring a very small audience for anything topical. And Byzantium produced notoriously little poetry after the sixth century'.
127. Kazhdan, People and Power, p. 101-2; Ševčenko, art.cit. (n.40), pp. 69-92; H.G. Beck, Das byzantinische Jahrtausend (Munich, 1978), p. 123.
128. Ševčenko, op.cit., p. 74; see above, Magdalino, Chapter 4, pp.58ff.
129. For all justification see my thesis, Fig. II. I stress that these figures are preliminary and will undergo revision. My assessment of the whole of literary society, positive and negative, would be a little over 400 in the proportion 9:11 in favour of the receivers.
130. The profession most acutely underrepresented is that of teachers: since at least R. Browning, 'Unpublished correspondence between Michael Italicus, Archbishop of Philippopolis and Theodore Prodromos', Byzantino-Bulgarica 1(1962), pp. 279-97, we have been aware that the natural summit for a teaching career was a see. Note also G. Weiss's warning that very few Byzantines lived by teaching and writing alone, op.cit. (n. 96), p. 7.
131. J.P. Sartre, 'Qu'est-ce que la littérature?', Situations II (Paris, 1948); R. Barthes, Le Degré Zéro de l'écriture (Paris, 1953).
132. S.R. Suleiman, The Reader in the Text, p. 37.
133. J. Leenhardt, 'Towards a Sociology of Reading', ed. Suleiman, op.cit., p. 206.
134. R. Jauss, 'Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory', New Literary History, 2(1970), p. 14.
135. ibid.
136. W.C. Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, 1961), p. 138; W. Iser, The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett (Baltimore, 1974).
137. V. Lange, 'The Reader in the Strategy of Fiction', Expression, Communication and Experience in Literature and Language, ed. R.G. Popperwell (London, 1973), pp. 86-102.
138. G. Prince, 'Introduction a l'étude du narrataire', Poétique, 14(1973), pp. 178-96.
139. E.g. A. Cameron, 'Images of Authority: Elites and Icons in Late Sixth-Century Byzantium', Past and Present, 84(1979), p. 3-35.
140. E.g. Ševčenko, JÖB 31/1 (1981), p. 302.
141. See n. 12 above.
142. Cf. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record, pp. 195-6. This is not to deny that over the twelfth century certain families came to play a particular part in literary activity. Literature ran in the family with the Tornikes, the Kamateros and by the end of the century the Choniates and Mesarites families, and similarly, up to twenty families including the Hagiotheodoritai, the Kontostephanoi, the Mesopotamitai and the Pantechnai, show a tendency to 'negative rhetoricity' over a considerable span of time. We should also not ignore the pervasiveness of the *o tou* relationship and the support of episcopal uncles for bright nephews throughout our period, see Darrouzès, Documents inédits, p. 56, Stiernon, REB, 218(1963), p. 185; V. Tiftixoglou, 'Gruppenbildungen innerhalb des konstantinopolitanischen Klerus während die Komnenenzeit', BZ 62(1969), p. 34, who exaggerates the normality of the procedure.
143. The forthcoming edition by Charlotte Roueché will highlight his literary debts; he appears to be writing in the first flush of a late eleventh-century fashion for *parainêsis*, otherwise attested by Theophylact's *Paideia basilikê*, and Alexius I's *Mousai*.
144. BMGS, 4 (1978), p. 44.
145. See for example Opheomachos, in Theophylact, epp. Meurs X, VIII, Migne, PG 126, cols. 71-4.
146. This paper has gone through successive versions given to a colloquium of the Royal Irish Academy, The New University of Ulster, the general seminar of the Centre for Byzantine Studies at Birmingham and as an informal talk at Dumbarton Oaks. I am grateful for the responses of Cyril Mango, Elizabeth Jeffreys, Judith Herrin, and Alexander Kazhdan on those occasions, to Michael McGann for his critical tolerance of each successive version and to Michael Angold for taking it off my hands at last.



CHAPTER 11 - WESTERN INFILTRATION OF THE BYZANTINE ARISTOCRACY:  
SOME SUGGESTIONS

Elizabeth Jeffreys

When Anna Comnena comments on her brother-in-law Nicephorus Euphorbenos Katakalon that 'on horseback he gave the impression that he was not a Byzantine at all but a native of Normandy', she reveals as much about Byzantine as Norman equestrian skills.<sup>1</sup> Some fifty years later this admiration has taken a practical form and we find that Anna's nephew Manuel on his accession organized his troops in exercises in horsemanship in the Western style, and is described by Kinnamos in terms reminiscent of Western knightly heroes.<sup>2</sup> The intervening period has thus seen an assimilation of Western military practise.

This is not in the least surprising. Even a cursory reading of the *Alexiad* (to take but one text) indicates the extent to which Westerners (described as Celts, Latins, Franks or just plain barbarians) formed part of the Byzantine fighting force - from the earliest years of Alexius' rebellion to his last difficult dealings with the Crusaders. Some contingents of Westerners appear to have been attached to one leader - for example, Constantine Humbertopoulos. Some seem to have had no leader of their own race, but are mentioned frequently in connection with certain Greek commanders, Tatikios in particular.<sup>4</sup> It is not always clear whether these forces are mounted or on foot.

Anna makes little mention of the size of the contingents; an exception is the group of 500 horsemen promised and then sent by the Count of Flanders (VII vi 1; VIII viii 5). From analogies with Norman campaigns in South Italy, where comparatively small bands of horsemen supported by foot-soldiers had a disproportionately drastic impact, the groups need not have been large to be useful (even supposing large numbers were available).<sup>5</sup> There must however have been some means of renewing their composition since instances of heavy losses are recorded.<sup>6</sup>

The *Alexiad* also indicates the extent to which individual Westerners came to play a prominent part in Byzantine politics - either threatening to establish an independent enclave, as did Roussel of Bailleul, or serving in Alexius' army and court. Western involvement is most strikingly demonstrated in the list of signatories to the Treaty of Devol, in 1108 (XIII xii 28). The imperial court is represented by the Sebastos Marinos, Roger son of Dagobert, Peter Aliphas, William of Gand, Richard of the Principate, Geoffrey of Mailli, Hubert son of Raoul and Paul the Roman, that is, by men from South Italy, Naples and Rome, most of them one time associates of Robert Guiscard. The Marquis de la Force has identified and

discussed these figures, arguing that their selection was a deliberate move by Alexius to demonstrate the degree of support he commanded among Westerners. Although these individuals may have been the Westerners with the highest political standing in Alexius' camp at that moment and in that place, there were others - men like Landulf expert in naval warfare and competent on land, who hailed from Italy.<sup>8</sup>

Western military techniques and equipment would thus have been observed under reasonably friendly circumstances, and not merely in the heat of battle. However, Anna also records the deep suspicion and lack of comprehension that existed between Latins (of whatever national group) and Greeks.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, a certain ambivalence, verging on sympathy, surfaces on occasion, appearing for example in Anna's grudging respect for Bohemund's handsome audacity (XIII x 4) or in her comments on her father's liking for Raymond de Saint-Gilles (X xi 9).

There was plainly a language barrier (as well as one of religious ritual and social custom), but it was not insurmountable. The practicalities of diplomacy required interpreters. We hear of these, with no indication of their social status, accompanying the officers who met the Crusading forces crossing to Epirus (X v 9), or assisting Alexius in Constantinople (X x 7). These men were presumably using a vernacular rather than formal Latin. Some members of Alexius' entourage were competent in the Celtic tongue (e.g. a certain Adralestos, XIII ix 1; or the companion of Manuel Boutoumites, XIV ii 6). Quite apart from the Latins like the Sebastos Marinos or Roger son of Dagobert whom one must imagine were ultimately fluent in the vernacular of both East and West, there are occasional references to members of leading Greek families who were not monolingual. Marianos Katakalon, for example, in one incident addressed the Latins (in this case French-speakers) in their own language.<sup>10</sup> Anna too, though she found herself unable, or unwilling, to pronounce the barbaric names (X x 4), derived information at least once from a Latin, a former envoy of the Bishop of Bari and a counsellor of Guiscard (III xii 8). Conversely it becomes apparent that, despite a vile accent, Bohemund knew enough Greek to make at least one pun (V vi 3). Realizing from Anna's strictures against the barbaric quality of John Italos' Sicilian-learned Greek (V viii 8) that her standards were high, perhaps Bohemund, who presumably also first met Greek in a South Italian context, can be credited with a certain fluency.

Byzantine society was one that was always receptive to men of ability, whatever their origins - providing that they became Orthodox. To choose but one example from the *Alexiad*, the death is recorded of Skaliaros, a Turk 'who had been a famous general in the East but was baptized' and entered Alexius' service.<sup>11</sup> Anna's comments on the variety of nationalities represented in the school for orphans founded by Alexius are instructive (XV vii 7). The Raouls, Rogers and Aliphas then who would seem to have joined Alexius after 1081, become more fully visible in 1108 and can be observed intermittently both in the *Alexiad* and elsewhere, whilst forming part of the surge of Norman expansion across Europe, are also part of this Byzantine pattern of receptivity. For example, by 1139 a member of the Raoul family named Leon is an Orthodox monk, copying theological manuscripts; the Rogers have an illustrious representative married

into the imperial family - John Dalassenos Rogerios, the Caesar Roger, husband of Alexius's, grand-daughter Maria.<sup>12</sup> But these Westerners are also exemplifying the mysterious Norman ability to blend into new environments.<sup>13</sup> Elsewhere indeed - in Normandy or England or South Italy - after the initial disruptive impact, the symbiosis of invader and invaded proved fruitful in cultural terms. What of Byzantium, which endured a double invasion, first of Normans as such, under Guiscard and Bohemund, and then of Westerners in general, in the guise of the First and subsequent Crusaders? Many of the invading Westerners, of course, would have simply passed through Byzantine territory - but not all. What about less tangible borrowings than military technology?

From before the middle of the twelfth century in Constantinople comes the first surviving written expression of two new strands in Byzantine literature. One involved the use of the vernacular in verse (admittedly only intermittently) by poets like Ptochoprodromos or the anonymous author of the Spaneas poem.<sup>14</sup> The other was concerned with the writing of novels, of which the earliest examples were probably those by Theodore Prodromos and Constantine Manasses. These developments - the one a decisive break with custom, the other a renewing of a genre ignored for generations - together heralded a loosening of Byzantine literary conventions, though both were brought to an end before the close of the century. In the West, the first years of the twelfth century also saw flourishing literary activity, which covered many genres in both prose and verse - lyric song, saints' lives and the epic chansons de geste, for instance. But the most conspicuous feature of this literature was that it was in the vernacular;<sup>15</sup> and of the vernacular literatures, the dominant was that in French, the language of the majority of the Westerners tramping round Byzantine territory - though the exact tinge of French depended on the speaker's homeland (England, France or Italy).

These literary experiments do not belong to the time of Alexius. In so far as they can be dated they come from the latter years of the reign of John Comnenus or the early years of Manuel - to the late 1130s or to the 1140s. Of the Ptochoprodromic poems one is dedicated to John himself (d. 1143), others to John's sons - to a Sebastokrator, commonly identified with his second son Andronikos (d. 1142) and to Manuel, the future emperor.<sup>16</sup> The Spaneas poem has been associated with, amongst others, a son of the Caesar Roger; the date of the Caesar's marriage is not known, but his son is likely to have been of an age to receive such advice in the 1130s.<sup>17</sup> For the novels, circumstantial arguments have been advanced suggesting that those of Theodore Prodromos and Constantine Manasses are to be placed in the 1140s.<sup>18</sup>

At this time, amongst the members of the imperial house who functioned on occasion as a patron one stands out, with the Emperor, as consistently active. This was the Sebastokratorissa Eirene, wife (then widow) of the Sebastokrator Andronikos just mentioned. Though she is ignored by Choniates and Kinnamos, enough material exists to construct an outline of her life. This material is to be found in works commissioned by Eirene, or addressed to her in the hope of her support. These are: 48 poems from the Mangana codex, Marc. Gr. XI 22, together with four others from Ambr. Gr. 0 94; two letters by John Tzetzes and his Theogony; four of the historical poems of

Theodore Prodromos and his Erotemeta; the Synopsis historikê of Constantine Manasses; the astrological poem, with a double attribution in the manuscripts to Theodore Prodromos and Constantine Manasses; two anonymous poems in Marc. Gr. 524, and two dedicatory epigrams; 43 letters,<sup>19</sup> by the monk Iakovos, and a treatise by him on the Holy Spirit.

The greatest detail is to be found in the poems written by Theodore Prodromos (notably on the birth of her youngest son Alexius in 1142) and by Manganeios Prodromos, author of the poems in the Mangana codex and a member of Eirene's household for at least twelve years.<sup>20</sup> The misfortunes described by Manganeios Prodromos are to some extent confirmed by the letters of the monk Iakovos, though Iakovos's chief concern is with Eirene's spiritual welfare and not with a clear account of events. It is plain that, after her husband's death, Eirene was at times persona non grata with Manuel, and imprisoned - even though her children remained in high favour.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, this is the period when, on present evidence, Eirene was most actively concerned with secular literature, to judge both from the works commissioned and Iakovos' exhortations to her to abandon Hellenic learning (e.g. in letter 18).

There are two points to be noted in connection with this patronage. First, Eirene is praised for the lavish rates at which she pays for her commissions. Manasses makes this particularly plain, with explicit statements that the size of the payment alone has reconciled him to the tedious and elementary nature of the task requested (e.g. Synopsis historikê, 7-17), though Tzetzes can be nearly as forthright. Secondly, the authors of the commissioned works praise Eirene for her learning, calling her, for example, psykhê philologôtatê (*ibid.*, 3) and psykhê philistorousa (Tzetzes, Theogony 1), though these may be simply the conventional rhetorical phrases suitable for praising a patron (and a woman at that). There is nonetheless a striking discrepancy between the standard of learning implied by the dedicatory passages or by the encomia and the works that are actually sponsored: an elementary grammar, potted history, Greek myths retold. The claims made by Anna Komnena herself for her literary skills and by others for those of Eirene are expressed in remarkably similar terms,<sup>22</sup> which makes the contrast between their achievements the more pointed.

Now the four secular writers associated with Eirene - Tzetzes, Manasses, Theodore Prodromos and Manganeios Prodromos - share a number of interests and common themes, best explained by mutual discussion (or readings in a theatron?). One of the most frequent involves flowery romantic imagery (clinging vines and curling locks) which is found especially in marriage poems (for Eirene's children, for example) and also in the fragments of Manasses's romance.<sup>23</sup> Since this romance was written in the political verse (a metre used only reluctantly by educated writers, and one of Tzetzes's chief objections to commissions from Eirene) and shares the imagery associated with Eirene, it has been argued that this work of romantic entertainment was written at Eirene's request. Theodore Prodromos's romance is to be seen as deriving from the same milieu. It is worth remembering that one of the Ptochoprodromic poems (an experiment in the use of the vernacular) may well have been dedicated to Eirene's husband. One begins to see how central is the position that Eirene

holds in the literary developments of the period.

In acting as a patroness Eirene was filling a role for which there were precedents amongst other female members of the Comnenian house. To take but one example, Anna's mother, Eirene Doukaina, was not only a devout student of theology but had attempted to commission a biography of her husband (XV xi 1). The *Sebastokratorissa* Eirene however was strikingly active as a patroness, even within a Comnenian context, and showed an unusual range of interests. What was her background? For Anna Comnena, thanks to remarks in the *Alexiad* and to George Tornikes' funerary oration, we can learn something of her intellectual training and her views on a literary education, as well as how she acquired it. For Eirene we have none of this. We do not even have clear information about her origins. In fact, in the marriage poems for her children, their Comnenian ancestry is emphasized and their spouses aristocratic lineage lauded, but Eirene's own family is passed over in silence. In thousands of lines of verse dedicated to her with their extensive passages of encomium there is not one word on her origins. The only comment made about Eirene, in contexts where one would expect references to her, state that she is extremely beautiful.<sup>24</sup> There does exist however one reference to Eirene's background which has been overlooked. It is to be found in the anonymous encomium in Marc. Gr. 524, in the following lines:

Γένος μὲν οὖν σὸν τὸ τῶν Αἰνεϊάδων  
ὡς εἰς ἀπαρχὴν ἀνάγειν καὶ συγγράφειν  
τρόπακα λαμπρὰ κατὰ τῶν ἀντιμάχων  
καὶ νεῦρα χαλκὰ καὶ σθένος βραχιόνων  
ἐξ ὧν πατὴρ ἄξιός ἦν σοι τοῦ γένους  
λόγου τε μακροῦ καὶ χρόνου μηκιστάτου. (28-33)<sup>25</sup>

It is plain that, in the author's mind, Eirene's family descend from the sons of Aeneas (*Genos ... to tō Aineiadōn*) while her father is a stout-hearted military representative of the line. But the implications are a little puzzling. How should we interpret 'sons of Aeneas'? In the *Timarion* a member of the Doukas family is said to be descended from Aeneas, referring to that family's legendary origins in Rome.<sup>26</sup> But Eirene is most unlikely to have been a Doukaina, or a member of a rival aristocratic clan with similar claims. This would have been mentioned in the encomiastic verse. The most usual meaning for 'Aineiadēs' is 'someone from Italy'. Zonaras uses the term specifically for inhabitants of Rome; Choniates uses it for Westerners in general (the Crusaders, as they looted Constantinople).<sup>27</sup>

Confirmation of Eirene's non-Greek origins can perhaps be found in the letters of Iakovos. Iakovos declares that he and Eirene are from the same patris (in a context which makes it unlikely that he is using a spiritual platitude; letter 21). Iakovos' own Greek is of a very peculiar kind. Most of his letters are composed from a string of quotations from the Church Fathers. His own contributions, brief linking phrases, are marked by grammatical errors.<sup>28</sup> One suspects that Greek was not his first language, and that the same would have been true of Eirene. One should note, however, Iakovos's statements that Eirene had been devoutly brought up in the Orthodox faith by her parents (letter 15). Whatever language problems may have remained in Eirene's domestic circumstances, religious assimilation would have begun early.

That the wife of Andronikos, his second son, should not be a member of an established Byzantine family, is entirely in keeping with the marriage policies of John Comnenus. His eldest child, Alexius, in 1122 was married to Dobrodeja Mstislavna (a fact known only from Russian sources); not much later Alexius' sister Maria was married to the Caesar Roger; in 1119-1120 John was unsuccessfully conducting negotiations for a marriage alliance with the Normans in Antioch and, again in 1122, John arranged the marriages of the two sons of Anna Comnena and Nicephorus Bryennios to two Georgian princesses.<sup>29</sup> A network of alliances was being constructed with the most powerful elements both inside and outside the empire. If one envisages that Eirene was the pretty daughter of a military man of Western origin, of the rank and calibre of, say, the Landulf who figures as both naval and land commander in the *Alexiad*, then this marriage too, which would have taken place between 1125-1130, would fit the pattern.

Returning to the question of literary developments, we still have no information as to why Eirene felt impelled to act so generously as a patron, or even why she chose to support writers at all - though our imaginations could suggest motives. But we can see perhaps why, once roused, her interests might take the course they did. Eirene's non-Greek background, and perhaps her imperfect education in Greek, led her to seek easily comprehensible works in an undemanding style and metrical form. Here it is useful to remember that Manuel's first empress, Eirene, the former Bertha von Sulzbach, asked for a paraphrase of the *Iliad* in the political verse from Tzetzes, a commission he found as tedious as any of the *Sebastokratorissa*'s.

Eirene's non-Greek, and probably Western, background could also have made her aware of Western literary activity in the vernacular, and the fact that this was respectable. One could imagine how this would lead her to command similar material in a Greek environment. Now much of the Western vernacular literature, like the *chansons de geste*, was both based on traditional orally transmitted material and also continued to be presented in oral performance. Many members of the audience could not themselves read the written form, which thus long remained of secondary importance only. These *chansons de geste* may also be seen as one of the vehicles for the largely unwritten knightly culture of Western Europe, a culture in the formation of which the Normans of France and England played a significant part. The extent to which this knightly way of life depended on oral rather than written communication to pass on its values and manners has recently received fresh emphasis.<sup>30</sup> In trying to apply these insights to Byzantine society we are embarking on a subject that is intangible indeed. Can we suppose that the aristocratic warriors of twelfth-century Constantinople absorbed, together with the admired Western military practises, respect for the orally transmitted vernacular tales which embodied the knightly code? Did they feel a new respect for the similar material that existed in Byzantium? Is this an explanation for the romantic trappings and simple style of the works commissioned by Eirene? It remains that in Eirene one is perhaps justified in seeing a symbol in the literary sphere of the wide changes that were taking place in Byzantine culture, whether aristocratic or not.

# NOTES

1. Alexiad (ed. B. Leib, Paris, 1937 ff.; repr. 1967. All references are to this edition), X iii 5. The episode would seem to have taken place in 1095, though of course Anna was expressing her opinion long after the event.
2. Exercises: Cinnamos, (Bonn) III 16 1836, p. 125; cf. S. Lambros, Ekphrasis tō yxlokontariō tou krataiou kai hagiou hemōn authentou kai basileōs, Neos Hellēnomnēmon, 5 (1908), 3-18. Knightly exploits: Kinnamos, II 7 (p.47). Manuel was later notorious for his preference for things Western: Niketas Choniates (ed. J.A. van Dieten, Berlin, 1975), 204.3.
3. E.g. Celts: Anna Comnena, The Alexiad, I iv 4; I v 3; VI x 2; VI xiv 4; VIII iii 5; VIII v 5; XI ix 2; Latins: VI xiv 4; VII iii 8; VII viii 5; Franks: I vi 1; Iv iv 3.
4. Humbertopoulos with Celtic warriors: Anna Comnena, The Alexiad, IV iv 3; VI xiv 4; VIII v 5; X ii 6; but note that these do not seem to have been attached to him when he first supported Alexius: II iv 7. Tatikios: VI x 2; VI xiv 4; VI vii 3; X ii 6; XI ii 4; XI ii 6; perhaps Tatikios' origins (son of a Saracen prisoner-of-war: IV iv 3) made him an effective commander of non-Greek mercenaries.
5. D.C. Douglas, The Norman Achievement 1050-1100, London, 1969, 77.
6. E.g. cf. Anna Comnena, The Alexiad, VII iii 8; the Maniakate Latins from Sicily (I v 2; VII ix 2) who are presumed to have been the supplemented remnants of a band (of Greeks) first recruited by George Maniakes in the 1040s.
7. Marquis de la Force, 'Les conseillers latins du Basileus Alexis Comnène', B 11, 1936, 153-165. For their subsequent hellenization, see D.M. Nicol, 'Symbiosis and integration. Some Greco-Latin families in Byzantium in the 11th to 13th centuries', Byzantinische Forschungen, 7, 1979, 113-136.
8. Landulf: Anna Comnena, The Alexiad, XI x 4; XII viii 8. Regrettably I have not been able to consult B. Skoulatos, Les person-nages byzantins de l'Alexiade, (Louvain, 1980).
9. E.g. Anna Comnena, The Alexiad, X v 4; XIII x 1; XIV ii 1; XIV iv 3.
10. Anna Comnena, The Alexiad X viii 5; this family may also have had servants of Western origin (e.g. Manuel of Modena, XIII x 3).
11. Baptized: Anna Comnena, The Alexiad, VI xiii 4; service: X ii 6; death: XIII v 2. One must remember that the traffic was not all one way; mercenaries change allegiance, and cf. V iv 2, X vii 3, XII ix 2 for Greeks serving with Bohemund or Hugh of Vermandois.
12. The literature is conveniently assembled and discussed in D.M. Nicol, op.cit., 128, 122-6.
13. R.H.C. Davis, The Normans and their Myth (London, 1976), 44-68; for the elusiveness of Norman settlers, see L.-R. Ménager, 'Persanteur et étologie de la colonisation normande de l'Italie', Fonti e studi del Corpus membranarum Italicarum, 11 (1975), 189-214. The narrow failure of the Normans to dominate Byzantium is a topic that deserves a separate study.
14. Michael Glykas's Poem from Prison is also part of this group but in date it falls outside the scope of the present argument.
15. I am not here concerned with theological, legal or scholarly works expressed in Latin, nor with those works in Latin, like the songs of the Archpoet or the Alexandreis of Walter of Châtillon, which drew on the same levels of inspiration as the vernacular but were in an ever-decreasing minority.
16. See H.-G. Beck, Geschichte der byzantinischen Volksliteratur, Munich, 1971, 101-5.
17. Beck, op.cit., 105-8.
18. E.M. Jeffreys, 'The Comnenian background to the romans d'anti-quitē', B 50 (1980), 474-484.
19. Mangana poems: only partially published, see E. Mioni, Bibliothēcae Divi Marci Venetiae codicum graecorum manuscriptorum Catalogus III (Rome 1970) 116 ff. for a check-list of editions. Tzetzes: letters 43, 56, ed. P.A.M. Leone (Leipzig, 1972); Theogony, ed. I. Bekker, Abhand. Berlin. Phil.-Hist. Kl. 1840. Theodore Prodromos: historical poems nos. 44-47, ed. W. Horandner (Vienna, 1974), Erotemeta, ed. C. Goettling (Leipzig, 1822), 80-197. Constantine Manasses: Synopsis historikē ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1837). Astrological poem: ed. E. Miller, Notices et Extraits 23.2 (1872), 8-39. Marc.Gr. 524: ed. S. Lambros, Neos Hellēnomnēmon, 8 (1911), 22 ff. Iakovos: letters in Par. Gr. 3039 (an edition is forthcoming).
20. The best presentation of the evidence from the Mangana codex (though in need of revision) remains that of S. Papadimitriou, VV 10 (1903), 102-163.
21. See the summary in F. Chalandon, Les Comnènes II: Jean II Comnène et Manuel I Comnène (Paris, 1912), 212-3. Eirene's eldest son John was, in default of any child of Manuel's, a potential imperial heir.
22. Marc. Gr. 524 (ed. Lambros), poem 56, lines 83-4; cf. Alexiad, Preface, para. 2.
23. See the discussion and texts cited in Jeffreys, op.cit., 479.
24. E.g. Marc. Gr. XI 22, poem 23, on John's marriage.
25. Marc. Gr. 524 (ed. Lambros), poem 56.

26. D.I. Polemis, The Doukai: a contribution to Byzantine Prosopography, London, 1968, 3 and 13.
27. Zonaras (Bonn), II, p. 5; Niketas Choniates, ed. VanDieten, p.652.
28. E.M. Jeffreys, 'The Sebastokratorissa Eirene as literary patroness: the monk Iakovos', JÖB 32, 1982. One must admit that Iakovos is infuriatingly vague in his statements: at present nothing in the letters permits a definite conclusion about his land of origin.
29. Chalandon, op.cit., 13, 16, 120.
30. M. Clanchy, From Memory to Written Record (London 1979), passim but especially 198-201.

## CHAPTER 12 - A PROVINCIAL ARISTOCRACY: THE BYZANTINE PROVINCES IN SOUTHERN ITALY (9th - 11th CENTURY)

Vera von Falkenhausen

In this paper I will not try to find a new definition of aristocracy or provincial aristocracy in Byzantium. I will simply analyse the class of the so-called archontes, that is, generally speaking, those members of the provincial society who held the secular power in the Byzantine provinces of southern Italy.<sup>1</sup> The period begins with the recovery of vast areas of southern Italy by Basil I during the last quarter of the 9th century - which coincides with the final loss of Sicily - and it ends with the Norman conquest of Byzantine Italy in the second half of the eleventh century. In this period the southern Italian provinces (the themes of Langobardia - later Italia, Calabria and Lucania) were at the periphery of the empire; from Constantinople they were accessible only by sea. There were, on the other hand, rather close political and cultural ties between the southern Italian subjects of the Eastern Roman Empire and their neighbours, the Lombard principalities and the Arab emirate of Sicily. Moreover, Byzantine southern Italy was an arena for many of the political and religious controversies between the western and eastern Empires and the churches of Rome and Constantinople. These factors are relevant for the composition and attitudes of the Byzantine aristocracy in southern Italy.

The class of archontes in Byzantine southern Italy was far from being homogeneous. It was composed, basically, of three elements:

- a. the stratêgoi and katepans and some other high-ranking military men and civil administrators, all sent from Constantinople,
- b. some members of the princely families of the adjacent Lombard principalities,
- c. the local upper class of the Byzantine provinces.

As a rule Byzantine provincial governors (stratêgoi or katepans or doukes) were not natives of the provinces they administered, and generally did not stay in the same theme for more than four or five years.<sup>2</sup> In spite of this, during their period of administration, as direct representatives of the emperor, as commanders-in-chief and as heads of the provincial bureaucracy they were not simply at the top of the hierarchy of the theme, but also in fact held the most power. Their arrivals and departures were punctiliously recorded in the local chronicles.<sup>3</sup> They gave or confirmed privileges to various provincials and to local churches and monasteries,<sup>4</sup> and they confiscated the property of rebels.<sup>5</sup> It is quite revealing that in the saints' lives of the period, which are among the most precious



sources for the history of Byzantine provinces, the description of friendly or hostile encounters between the saint and the local stratêgos is a hagiographical topos. Such encounters with the highest secular authority in the province help to emphasize the saintliness of the holy man. There is the case of St. Nilus who successfully appealed to the magistros Nicephorus to pardon the prôtospatharios Gregory Maleinos, who had led a local rebellion; St. Elias the Younger, on the other hand, was not successful in pleading for the rebel Koloumbos, but Michael, the taxiarkhos of Calabria, as a result of refusing the saint's request, died a cruel death. St. Sabas is said to have acted as a mediator between the katepan Romanos and the western emperor's court in Rome. St. Elias Spelaiotês as a young monk was driven out of his monastery by the corrupt stratêgos Niketas Bothêritês. Later on in his career, he tried in vain to convince another stratêgos of Calabria, Byzalon, to end his rebellion against the emperor. Needless to say, both evil doers succumbed to divine punishment. St. Gregory of Burscheild was pursued by a katepan who wanted to take him, against his will, to Constantinople as a sort of religious trophy.<sup>10</sup> St. Nilus and St. Vitalis fared better; they got rich donations, one from the devout stratêgos of Calabria, Basil,<sup>11</sup> the other from a katepan called Basil, probably Basil Boiðannês.<sup>12</sup> The same hagiographical topos can be found in contemporary saints' lives from other parts of the empire.<sup>13</sup>

Many of the stratêgoi or katepans of southern Italy, whose family names are known, came from the highest level of the Byzantine aristocracy. There are three Argyroi, two Dokeianoï, two Phokades; there is a Delphinas, a Kekaumenos, a Krênitês, a Kourkouas, a Tarkhaneiotês, a Tornikios, a Xiphias. There are members of the lower nobility, an Amirooulos, a Karamallos, a Kladôn, a Limnogalaktos, a Skepidês,<sup>14</sup> and there are also self made men, like the brilliant soldier George Maniakês.<sup>15</sup> In the second half of the tenth century the katepanate of Italy was one of the highest ranking posts in Byzantine provincial administration.<sup>16</sup>

The principle that the stratêgos should not be a native of his theme is generally observed in southern Italy. His task was not only to protect the province against outside enemies, but also, or even primarily, to represent the emperor's interests, if need be against the interests of the provincials. Among the large number of known stratêgoi, katepans and doukes only two seem to be of Italian origin: Oursoleôn, who was killed in an insurrection against him in 921, seems to have been an Italian, judging from his name, which is very common in southern Italy, but unknown in other parts of the empire.<sup>17</sup> The doux of Italy Argyros (1051-1058) was a son of Melês, a native of Bari and leader of an Apulian rebellion against Byzantium. Argyros was a boy when he was sent to Constantinople as a hostage and he was educated there before returning to Bari as a private citizen. After a brief political flirtation with the Norman invaders he became a loyal, though ineffective Byzantine governor of his homeland.<sup>18</sup> Apparently the two native-born governors were emperor's men and won no particular favour at home.

There is, however, some reason to doubt whether another imperial law, which forbade the stratêgoi to own property in their theme,<sup>19</sup> was equally respected. In any case there was a way to evade the law by renting property or by taking it in emphyteusis. The first Byzantine

governor in Apulia, the baïoulos Gregory, acquired for life property from several churches and monasteries in his province; moreover, for twenty-nine years he rented the Apulian possessions of Montecassino. When he left Italy in 885, he returned everything to the previous owners.<sup>20</sup> In the first half of the eleventh century the katepanissê Theoktistê - we do not know, which katepan was her husband - held a proasteion with groves of mulberry, which belonged to the Church of Reggio.<sup>21</sup> But there were other ways as well of getting profit out of one's province: Krênitês, stratêgos of Calabria (ca 944-947), for instance, quite successfully speculated in grain. During a prolonged food shortage in Sicily and northern Africa, he bought grain and all sorts of food cheaply in Italy and sold it at an inflated price to the Arabs. According to Skylitzês, Krênitês was deposed and condemned by Constantine Porphyrogenitus;<sup>22</sup> other governors, however, must have acted in the same way and gone unpunished.

There is no evidence that the stratêgoi or katepans were normally accompanied by their families during their often brief stay in southern Italy. Some families may have preferred the amenities of Constantinople to the less sophisticated way of life in a remote province; the adult son of the Argyros mentioned above remained in the capital during his father's Italian appointment;<sup>23</sup> possibly the emperor considered him a guarantee for his father's loyalty. Some wives or sons may have had to look after the family estate during their husbands' or fathers' absence. On the other hand, a young son could begin his official career on his father's staff,<sup>24</sup> and the katepanissê Theoktistê, who held land belonging to the metropolitan Church of Reggio, obviously had accompanied her husband to Italy, and may have stayed there after his death. Guillou thinks that the katepan Basil Argyros Mesardonitês was accompanied by his brother Leo, but his argument is not altogether convincing.<sup>25</sup> There is, however, a strange phenomenon which links the various stratêgoi and katepans to southern Italy, even long after their departure: their family names often become common first names or surnames in southern Italy: Argyros is frequently used as a first name in Bari and Kourkouas in Taranto; there is a Trachanioti in Monteverde, a Malakinos in Gerace, a Krênitês in Merkourion and a George Maniakês (twelfth century) in Taranto.<sup>26</sup> In spite of their prominent names, these people very often did not hold important positions, and they are not likely to have been descendants of former stratêgoi or katepans. Possibly they were their freedmen's or clients' descendants.

Public building was one of the governor's responsibilities. Basil Boiðannês (1017-1028) founded and fortified several cities in northern Apulia, namely Troja, Castel Fiorentino, Civitate, Dragonara and perhaps Montecorvino,<sup>27</sup> and Basil Argyros Mesardonitês (1010-1016) built a fortified residence in Bari, the praitôrion, with a chapel dedicated to St. Demetrios.<sup>28</sup> Constantine Karamallos, stratêgos of Sicily and one of the last defenders of the island against the Arabs, built or rebuilt the fortress of Castel Mola above Taormina.<sup>29</sup> As for private buildings or ecclesiastical foundations, it is more likely that the stratêgoi or katepans invested in their home towns or in Constantinople, than in a province where they stayed only for a few years and to which they probably never returned. In fact, the katepan Christopher (1028-1029), together with his wife and their children, founded the church of the Panagia tôn Khalkeôn in Thessalonica.<sup>30</sup> If his name was really Bourgaris, as is given in an

additional note to the *Chronicon siculo-saracenum*,<sup>31</sup> it is possible that Thessalonica was his home. In 1042 Eustathios Skepidēs was a stratēgos of Lucania.<sup>32</sup> Apparently his family came from Cappadocia, for there are two churches close to the village of Soganli founded by his namesakes: Karabaş Kilise, built in 1060/61 by the prōtospatharios Michael Skepidēs and some other members of his family, and Gök Kilise, dedicated by John Skepidēs, prōtospatharios epi tou khrysotriklinou, hypatos and stratēgos. In the latter church there is a rare representation of St. Eustathios chasing the deer, which suggests that the stratēgos of Lucania was a close relative of the founder of Gök Kilise.<sup>33</sup> According to the life of St. Nilus, in the second half of the tenth century an unnamed koitōnitēs, a eunuch of the imperial household, came to Rossano. Impressed by Nilus's holiness, at the end of his stay in Calabria he invited the saint to follow him to Constantinople and to become abbot in a monastery he wanted to establish in the imperial city. Nilus refused to go to Constantinople,<sup>34</sup> but the high official did not consider founding the monastery for his retirement in the remote province of Calabria.

On the other hand, it was quite useful for the stratēgos, who was a stranger in his theme, to entertain friendly relations with the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the province and with the local holy men. They could both provide a link with the population of the theme and pray for his military enterprises and his soul. In this respect, donations to local churches and monasteries could help. The prai-positos Basil Pedititēs, commander-in-chief of the Byzantine troops in Sicily (1041/42), gave his skaramangion, his official cloak, to the church of St. Nicholas of Calamizzi in Reggio.<sup>35</sup> Basil, stratēgos of Calabria, an admirer of St. Nilus, had gained 500 nomismata from the Cretan campaign of Nicephorus Phokas (961) which he wanted to dedicate to the saint's monastery: he offered to cover the altar with precious cloths and to finance the construction of a bigger and more beautiful church. St. Nilus, a highly ascetic monk, declined everything for himself and for his monastery, but he encouraged the noble donor to offer his gifts to the bishop's church.<sup>36</sup> Another contemporary of St. Nilus, the former imperial judge of Italia and Calabria, Eupraxios, founder of a nunnery in Rossano, where he was buried, is likely to have been of local origin.<sup>37</sup> In 1032, the katepan Pothos Argyros founded a church on the outskirts of Bari, which was dedicated by the Latin archbishop to the Virgin, St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist. The church, furnished with liturgical vessels and manuscripts, was assigned to two Greek monks from the monastery of Turri (Basilicata), who had to pray for the emperors, the katepans and their armies.<sup>38</sup> Apparently the relations between the katepan's court in Bari and the monks of Turri had been established by Pothos's predecessor, Basil Boiōannēs, who had invited St. Vitalis of Turri to Bari.<sup>39</sup> To give a final example, in the Museo del matroneo di S. Nicola in Bari there is a small marble capital, which has been published three times in recent years. It is thought to be a part of a tenth or eleventh-century iconostasis in one of the chapels belonging to the katepan's residence.<sup>40</sup> On two sides of the capital are monograms which can be read as Leonti and patrikiō;<sup>41</sup> there must have been a corresponding capital bearing the monograms of Kyrie boēthei and tō doulō sou.<sup>42</sup> In the 10th century the high dignity of patrikios was quite rare in southern Italy, being conferred almost exclusively on the stratēgoi. Therefore one could identify the donor of the iconostasis, the patrikios Leo, with the

stratēgos of Longobardia of that name.<sup>43</sup>

This evidence, though meagre, suggests that, if the stratēgoi or katepans founded or embellished churches in their themes, they preferred to do it in Bari, the town where they resided. These foundations had not so much a private as an official character; they were linked not so much with the person or the family of the founder as with the latter's office as governor.

The Byzantine recovery of southern Italy had been achieved mainly at the expense of the Lombard principalities. All Apulia, except the Terra Salentina, had belonged to the principality of Benevento, while most of Basilicata and northern Calabria had been part of the principality of Salerno. Using military pressure, the first representatives of the basileus in southern Italy tried to reduce the Lombard princes to the status of imperial clients. In 878, Adelchis of Benevento was murdered by his relatives and replaced providentially by his philo-Byzantine nephew Gaideris. The imperial general, the baileulos Gregory, might have had a hand in this political manipulation. When, only four years later, Gaideris in his turn was removed from his throne by his cousins, he fled to the imperial court at Constantinople, where he was honoured with the dignity of prōtospatharios. But soon he was sent back to Italy and assigned the small town of Oria in southern Apulia as his residence.<sup>44</sup> Presumably, Basil I wanted him to be close as a reserve candidate for the Beneventan throne and to foster goodwill towards Byzantium among the Apulian population which had only recently become subject to the eastern empire. Some years later, his colleague from Salerno, Waimar I, went to Constantinople where the emperors, Leo VI and Alexander, assigned him his principality and conferred on him the title of patrikios.<sup>45</sup>

In theory the Byzantine emperors considered all the Lombard territories to be theirs. They treated the local princes as clients, conferring on them high dignities and attaching their sons to the court of Constantinople; but, on the other hand, they never gave up the idea of conquering the whole territory and of liquidating the local dynasties, whenever a likely occasion offered itself.<sup>46</sup> Landulf I, prince of Capua and Benevento (910-943), had been in Constantinople as a young man, on a diplomatic mission. He got the usual honorary titles for himself and for his brother and probably established some useful political friendships. Anyway, in later years he proved to be well acquainted with the patrikios Kosmas of Thessalonica, and with the regent, the patriarch Nicholas Mystikos himself.<sup>47</sup> One of his sons was educated at Constantinople. In 921 Landulf staged a rebellion against the Byzantine stratēgos, who on this occasion was killed. This rebellion received partial support from the Lombard inhabitants of the Byzantine theme. The Beneventan prince, however, did not intend to sever all links with the Byzantine government, but merely wanted to become stratēgos himself of all of Longobardia (holēs Longibardias), that is, of the Byzantine theme and his own principality. This project was discussed in a letter of the patriarch Nicholas Mystikos, but in the end it was not realized. Presumably Landulf was not willing to accept the Byzantine conditions, namely to send his wife to the Peloponnese or a second son as a hostage to Constantinople.<sup>48</sup>

In the first half of the tenth century there was a group of Lombard princes resident at the Byzantine court, just as there were also members of the Bulgarian and Armenian aristocracies. Some of these princes may have been integrated into the eastern Roman system, others would have been eager to return to Italy. Unfortunately, they are not mentioned in Byzantine sources, but in 968, when Liutprand, bishop of Cremona, went to Constantinople on a mission for the western emperor Otto I, he met there the brother of Pandolf I, prince of Capua and Benevento.<sup>49</sup> Pandolf himself was a strong supporter of the western emperor, but his brother Romuald, who, according to the *Chronicon Salernitanum* "*inter Graecos a puericia fuerat*", felt and acted as a Byzantine. He came back to Italy with the Byzantine army to fight against his kinsmen. Finally he was taken prisoner defending Byzantine Ascoli (northern Apulia) against his brother's Frankish allies.<sup>50</sup>

After the reestablishment of the Western empire, in the second half of the tenth century, the Byzantine influence on the Lombard principalities diminished. The local princes preferred or were forced to align themselves with western powers. As far as Byzantium was concerned, they were just neighbours. By now these principalities presented less of a threat to the Byzantine provinces, for after a hundred years of imperial administration the population of the Byzantine themes felt less close to their Lombard neighbours than before.

Very little is known about the local population on the eve of the Byzantine recovery of southern Italy. However, since the beginning of the Arab conquest of Sicily in 827 quite a number of Sicilians, who could afford it, left for safer parts of the empire, especially for the Peloponnese.<sup>51</sup> In 838, the duke of Naples invited Arab troops from Sicily to help him against his neighbour, Sico, prince of Benevento. From that date most of the wars between the local princes in southern Italy were fought with Arab mercenaries from Africa, Spain and Sicily, who plundered and devastated vast areas. They occupied Taranto in 841 and finally founded an independent emirate in Bari (847-871).<sup>52</sup> Calabria was covered by a system of Arab strongholds. Many of the local population lost their property, their freedom or their lives.<sup>53</sup> It is possible that the later patriarch of Constantinople, Nicholas Mystikos, who was born in Italy in 852,<sup>54</sup> left his home for the imperial city in that period of general insecurity. Throughout his life he maintained a strong interest in the political developments in southern Italy and never entirely lost contact with his Italian relatives.<sup>55</sup>

When Byzantium recovered Apulia (ca 875-880), that region had been Lombard for two hundred years, except for the Arab experience. Those of the old Roman population, who had survived the Lombard conquest and stayed, had completely adapted themselves to the new regime. Many of them had chosen Lombard names and all had been living according to the Lombard law. There were no pre-Lombard political structures left. Only in the *Terra Salentina* and in Calabria could Byzantium count on the continuity of Graeco-Roman traditions. In 876 the Lombard *gastaldus* of Bari invited the Byzantine general, the *baioulos* Gregory, to his town, to protect it against an Arab attack. Gregory, who was stationed in Otranto, had been waiting for that opportunity, and came at once. He "*statim apprehensum*

*gastaldeum illiusque primores Constantinopolim misit, ut quibus iureiurandum fidem dederat*".<sup>56</sup> This passage suggests that the Byzantine authorities tried to collaborate with the local Lombard upper-class and to integrate it into the new political and administrative system. On the other hand, there probably were new local families, which rose to prominence with and after the Byzantine conquest, getting appointments and titles from the new rulers. In the nineties of the ninth century we find at Matera a certain Godinis, *imperialis protospatharius*, son of Radelchis, *imperialis protospatharius*, a Lombard judging from his name, who had started to collaborate very early with the imperial administration. Godinis must have been a wealthy man, who was able to rent and administer all the property the Benedictine abbey of S. Vincenzo al Volturno owned in the *gastaldatus* of Acerenza.<sup>57</sup> He may be identical with the Godinos *prôtospatharios* and *archôn*, to whom the patriarch Nicholas Mystikos wrote in 921, praising him for his outstanding loyalty to the emperors and his political acumen during a local rebellion.<sup>58</sup> In Conversano we find another local Lombard family, which supported the Byzantine government from the beginning: in 899, Dalfio, imperial *spatharokandidatos*, was a local judge in a property case. His son Grimoald, a *spatharokandidatos* himself, was married to the daughter of the *gastaldus* Madelfrid, a high Lombard provincial official. Grimoald, too, must have been a wealthy man, for in 915 he gave a lavish donation to the local monastery of St. Leucius - landed property in twenty-five different locations, five slaves, three pairs of oxen, fifty sheep, sixty pigs, six horses and four donkeys.<sup>59</sup> As he did not take the monastic habit himself, but pursued a political career to become a *prôtospatharios epi tou khrysotriklinou* in 938,<sup>60</sup> his gifts must have been only a part, maybe a small part, of his fortune: but again, we do not know whether he had been attracted or recruited by the Byzantine government because he belonged to the local upper class, or whether he had risen socially and economically through Byzantine service.

Besides the local Lombard families, there were immigrants from the East. The long decades of war and civil war had created a demographic gap in southern Italy. In some areas there was a great shortage of local labour and soldiers. Therefore, in regions which were particularly deserted, Byzantium organized the collective settlement of immigrants from other parts of the empire: settlers from the Pontos, slaves from the Peloponnese, Armenian soldiers and prisoners from the war against the Paulicians.<sup>61</sup> The Armenian impact is especially noticeable. In a privilege for Montecassino (892), Symbathikios, the first *stratêgos* of Longobardia, an Armenian himself, promised to protect the monastery against the interference of Greek, Armenian and Lombard officials.<sup>62</sup> The immigrants stayed and became integrated into the local society. Armenian names like Kourtikês, Krikorikios and Mel (from Mleh or Ismael) became frequent in Apulia, especially in Bari and in the coastal areas. In the *hinterland* the immigration was felt less.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, most of the local judges in the Apulian coastal towns bore imperial titles,<sup>63</sup> and many of the witnesses, who signed legal deeds, were Byzantine dignitaries or officials.<sup>64</sup> Even the Latin bishops and abbots preferred to choose their *advocatores* from among the imperial *archontes*.<sup>65</sup> But the main problem for the historian studying the Apulian aristocracy under

Byzantine rule is the general lack of family names. Only in Calabria, which on the whole is less well documented, can we distinguish some local noble families by their names: the Ankinarēsai,<sup>66</sup> the Maleinoi in Rossano and Stilo,<sup>67</sup> and the Mesimerioi in Catanzaro.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, the documentation is not sufficient to enable us to reconstruct a family either through references to their landed property or through a succession of names of fathers and sons. One can, however, assume that, as everywhere in the Byzantine empire, a man, who had received an imperial dignity or was holding an office in the provincial administration, had some potential to get promotions for other members of his family as well. In fact, we can identify quite a number of local families of Lombard, Greek or Armenian origin, which held Byzantine titles or offices for more than one generation: Porphyrios tourmarchēs was son of the gastaldus Benedict and related to the tourmarchēs Maio (Conversano 1013).<sup>69</sup> Faraco, imperial topotērētēs, was son of Maraldus, imperial prōtopatharios and topotērētēs of Polignano (1019).<sup>70</sup> In 1035/36 there were two tourmarchai at Trani, called Maraldus, uncle and nephew.<sup>71</sup> The judge and epi tou pantheou John, son of the tourmarchēs Byzantius, was active at Trani between 1072 and 1082.<sup>72</sup> In 1028 two Lombard brothers, Teudelmannus and Gaideris were imperial tourmarchai at Bari, and Peter, imperialis kritis de civitate Vari, was the son of the tourmarchēs Kaloiðannēs.<sup>73</sup> In the same year, a privilege given by the Latin archbishop of Taranto to a newly founded church was signed in Latin by the metropolitan's clergy and in Greek by four members of the local aristocracy: Adralestos, the son of the prōtopatharios Peter and grandson of the prōtopatharios John, Theophylaktos, the son of Leo tourmarchēs and grandson of the same prōtopatharios John, the tourmarchēs Constantine, who was the son of Leo spatharokandidatos, and, finally the tourmarchēs John, who was the archbishop's advocator.<sup>74</sup> In some cases it is quite interesting to note the strange mixture of Latin, Greek, Biblical, Lombard and other names. We find Porfirus commerciaris filius Romualdi iudicis,<sup>75</sup> Caloiohannes filius Adelprandi<sup>76</sup> and many other examples of that kind. The general trend leads to a reduction in Lombard names, while Byzantine names increase.

At least in the case of southern Italy the evidence indicates that most of the official positions, except that of governor and of some high military and fiscal posts, were held by local people. Even the post of the second-in-command, the ek prosōpou tou thematos, was given to members of the local aristocracy: in 954 there was Romuald imperialis protospatharius de ipso chrysotrikline et prosopo Longobardie, who, judging from his name, must have been a Lombard;<sup>77</sup> on the other hand, we know of an ek prosōpou of Calabria, Stephen Maleinos, who was a member of a distinguished Calabrian family.<sup>78</sup> Thus the lower and middle levels of the administration were in the hands of people who knew the local language - Latin remained the most common language in Apulia throughout the Byzantine period - and knew the local laws and usages. Hence the province had a certain administrative autonomy and administration proved less expensive for the central government, which had to send very few appointees. We do not know, on the other hand, whether many Italian subjects of Byzantium continued their military or civil careers in other parts of the Empire. There is nevertheless the case of the doux Argyros, who served as an officer of the imperial guard at Constantinople in the forties of the eleventh century, and then became stratēgos of

Paphlagonia.<sup>79</sup>

In some cases the civil and ecclesiastical hierarchies were inter-related, though it is difficult in the case of the bishops to identify their social background. They generally do not indicate their family's or father's names. The Greek metropolitans and bishops of Calabria belonging to the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Constantinople were chosen in Byzantium and probably not all of them were Italians. The brebion of the metropolitan church of Reggio mentions, for the year 964, Peter tourmarchēs, nephew of Theophylact, archbishop of the town;<sup>80</sup> two explanations suggest themselves: either both men belonged to a family of archontes, or the nephew was advantaged in his secular career by the uncle's high ecclesiastical position. Only for the early Norman period is there clear evidence that members of the leading local families became bishops in their towns: Nicholas Maleinos in Rossano and Theodore Mesimerios in Squillace.<sup>81</sup> In the Roman Catholic church of Apulia, which did not come under the patriarch's jurisdiction, the situation was quite different: the bishops had to be Roman Catholics, and therefore could not be sent from other parts of the empire. Generally speaking, they were local people, elected according to western usage by the people and clergy of their town, but their political loyalty would then come under the scrutiny of the imperial authorities of the province. Pao, episcopus sancte sedis Kanusine et Brindisine Ecclesie, (ca. 980-993) had been a local official before his episcopal election. In fact his handwriting has been identified with that of Pao clericus et gastaldus, active in Bari in 976. After the death of Byzantius, Latin archbishop of Bari, in 1035, the local population elected as his successor the prōtopatharios Romuald, who was a senior imperial judge in the town. The katepan, however, did not agree with that choice: he exiled Romuald and his brother Peter to Constantinople. Finally the local population and the representative of the emperor agreed on the person of Nicholas, who apparently belonged to the same class of local archontes as Romuald: his uncle was a judge and his cousin a spatharokandidatos. Before he had entered the ecclesiastical orders he had founded two churches at his own expense and on his own land. During his period as archbishop of Bari he proved to be a loyal supporter of the Byzantine cause.<sup>82</sup>

The medieval economy was essentially based on agriculture, and generally land was the basis of an individual's wealth. Landed property meant in Apulia mostly vineyards and, in the northern part of the province, fields of grain. Olives, apparently, were not cultivated in groves, but as single trees scattered in fields, gardens and vineyards. In Calabria besides vines and olives, there was in the eleventh century, extensive cultivation of mulberry trees, the leaves of which were indispensable for the silk industry.<sup>83</sup> There is no evidence of cattle-breeding on a large scale. Our documents mention mainly sheep and pigs and then in modest numbers. In northern Apulia, however, the traditional area for transhumance, herds are mentioned, but we do not know their size or to whom they belonged.

We can assume, as has been said before, that members of the landed Lombard aristocracy tried to preserve their property, by entering imperial service. They could, in addition, expect their loyalty to be rewarded by the emperor or his provincial governors with a grant of land or rights over land. The judge Byzantius, a



native of Bari, for instance, remained faithful to the emperor during Maniakēs's rebellion (1043) and fought bravely against the Normans. The katepan Eustathios Palatinos therefore gave him the village of Fogliano or Folignano, specifying that the inhabitants of that village should no longer pay their taxes and corvées to the imperial tax collectors, but to their new lord, who, moreover, had the right to attract more settlers and agricultural hands to Fogliano and a nearby deserted village. Untaxed additional labour would render the landed property more valuable. Byzantium was also given the power of jurisdiction over the villagers in all but capital charges.<sup>84</sup> After an insurrection in Taranto, staged or at least supported by the local archbishop, the notary Genesios, chief financial administrator of the church of Taranto, who, under difficult circumstances, had remained loyal to Byzantium, in 1054 was given the rebels' confiscated property.<sup>85</sup> The Constantinopolitan Basil tou Krommydou, lōrikatos kai prōtomandatōr epi tou basilikou armamentou, a low-ranking officer probably attached to the arsenal, had been recompensed by the katepans with a small house in Bari which he could sell for twenty-four nomismata, when he was ordered back home in 1032 after more than ten years of service in Italy.<sup>86</sup> A more sophisticated form of imperial concession was to grant a monastery in kharistikē. In these cases the emperor or his provincial representative gave an imperial monastery, usually for three generations, to a lay dignitary, who in theory was to protect and to sponsor the monastery, but in fact got the full usufruct of its property and its income. Thus the spatharokandidatos Christopher Bokhomakēs, who had distinguished himself fighting the Arabs, was rewarded with the imperial monastery of St. Peter in Taranto.<sup>87</sup>

There is some evidence from ninth-century documents that a few rich Lombard landowners controlled property in various parts of the principality of Benevento. To give only a few examples: Wacco, a gastaldus in Benevento, owned several farms close to Trani and Potenza and in various places in Campania, houses in Benevento and other property in Salerno and Naples; Stephen, another gastaldus, possessed land in Benevento, Capua and Apulia.<sup>88</sup> We do not know, however, whether these families preserved their property through the Arab invasions. For the tenth and eleventh centuries, it is quite evident that even wealthy landowners' property was rather scattered. There is no evidence for large, unified estates in private hands, except for church property.<sup>89</sup> When the spatharokandidatos Grimoald, mentioned above, made his generous donation to the church of St. Leucius close to Conversano (915), he gave among other gifts twenty-five mostly unconnected pieces of land in various locations between Bari and Conversano.<sup>90</sup> The notary Genesios, chief administrator of the church of Taranto, left in his will, for his soul and to his relatives, vineyards, fields and olive trees at eight different places between Taranto and Bari and a house in his hometown.<sup>91</sup> There is similar evidence from Calabria: an unnamed primikērios made his will in Stilo in 1040.<sup>92</sup> He provided generously for the monastery founded by him and dedicated to the Virgin. An official extract from the will, concerning his donations to the church has been preserved: and again there are fields, vineyards, water-mills and mulberry trees in seventeen different locations all around Stilo.<sup>93</sup>

One of the reasons for the fragmentation of landed property was the constant division of it between the various heirs. Sometimes a

property belonging to several brothers or cousins was held together for one or two generations, but finally it was divided, as for instance in 1054 the property of the seven brothers from Stilo named Presbyterianoi. They belonged, apparently, to the lower ranks of the local nobility: among their fourteen descendants there were three priests and three spatharokandidatoi, of whom one held the military office of taxiarkhēs.<sup>94</sup> After those divisions the various heirs used to buy, sell and exchange land, trying to consolidate their holdings. In fact, property alienation was frequent.

Another way of extending one's possessions was to rent land at a low rate from ecclesiastical or monastic institutions. This practice was not only popular with the stratēgoi and katepans, but with the native aristocracy as well. The prōtospatharios Godinis of Matera, who rented the property of S. Vincenzo al Volturno in the gastaldatus of Acerenza, has been mentioned above.<sup>95</sup> We also find among the tenants of the metropolitan church of Reggio a number of tourmarkhai.<sup>96</sup> Generally the rent paid to the religious institution was rather low, but often the tenant had to pay a considerable sum to establish the lease, and only wealthy men, like Byzantine officials and dignitaries who were regularly paid in gold, would have had such sums at their disposal. If we think of the five hundred nomismata the stratēgos Basil offered to St. Nilus, and the six thousand Argyros gave to the monastery of Farfa,<sup>97</sup> it becomes obvious that large sums of money were circulating within this class.

There is some slight evidence that members of the local aristocracy were engaged in trading activities. The chronicle of the so-called Anonymus Barensis mentions a number of merchants and ship-owners, who were trafficking with the eastern parts of the empire. One of them was Maraldus Ycanatus (from Greek hikanatos), whose family had been dramatically involved in the struggle for power among the Bari nobility in both the city and province.<sup>98</sup>

Unlike the foreign stratēgoi and katepans the archontes of local origin invested eagerly in the foundation of private churches and monasteries in southern Italy. They hoped to die at home, perhaps as a monk in their own monastery, where through their endowment they had established a liturgical service in perpetuity. Some of these monastic establishments were rather modest affairs, set up simply to guarantee the regular prayers for the salvation of the souls of the founder and his descendants. To this category belonged, probably, St. Andrew's, a monastery close to Calvera (Basilicata), which the tourmarkēs Luke and his brothers had inherited from their parents. The place had been destroyed and deserted during the Norman invasion; therefore, in 1053, the brothers, who were not able or willing to rebuild, gave the ruins to the flourishing abbey of Cava.<sup>100</sup> Other foundations had a more ambitious character: in 1015, the monk Nikōn and his son, the tourmarkhēs Oursoulos, gave to the kouboukleisios<sup>101</sup> Luke, abbot of St. Ananias, some land in the area of Oriolo in northern Calabria close to the Ionian Sea. Luke for his part, assisted by the local population, was required to build a castle on the land to protect the rural population in the case of an Arab attack. Within the walls he had to build a monastery, where Nikōn, the lay founder, wanted to live as a monk for the rest of his life. In theory, Luke as abbot had the right to choose his own successor, but, according to the charter of foundation, if one of Nikōn's descendants was a monk



and willing to become abbot, he should have precedence. The local nobility had an interest in this monastic fortress, for the charter is signed by four archontes, one taxiarkhês and two topotêtêtai, all belonging to the family of Kapêgrassa, and by one other tourmarkhês.<sup>102</sup> Following Byzantine practice, it was common for the lay founder to continue to control the choice of abbot and the administration of the monastery. Thus the spatharokandidatos John, disappointed by the behaviour of the monk Gerasimos, whom his father, the taxiarkhês Kalos, had chosen to lead the family's monastery in Basilicata, deposed him and replaced him with someone more satisfactory.<sup>103</sup> Quite different is the decision of Sasso from Monopoli (Apulia), who had bought the monastery of St. Nicholas on the cliffs near the harbour, where he became a monk. Doubting his heirs' religious fervour, he formally stated that the monastery should be legally independent from his descendants. Sasso's mistrust was well-founded; in fact, his son and his son-in-law, the prôtospatharios Rousos Kharzanitês, dealt with St. Nicholas as if it were their private property. Only the following generation, the spatharokandidatos and epi tou pantheou Toubakios and his brother, respected their grandfather's will.<sup>104</sup> Among other aristocratic foundations in Byzantine southern Italy can be mentioned St. Peter's qui se vocat de Sergio Prothospathario in Bari,<sup>105</sup> the church of All Saint's, built by Teudemannus domestikos, also in Bari,<sup>106</sup> St. Menas, the family monastery of the Ankênariseis close to Rossano,<sup>107</sup> and St. Leo of Catania, a monastery founded in Gerace by the taxiarkhês Leo Mauroutzikos and his wife.<sup>108</sup>

Other members of the local nobility did not found their own church, but made donations to existing ecclesiastical institutions. The tourmarkhês Delterios, or better Delecterius, gave a marble icon to the church of S. Maria di Dionisio in Trani. The dedicatory inscription on the frame can be read as Kyrie bôithê ton doulo sou Delterêon tourmarkhê. Judging from his name, the pious donor was of local origin, for the name Delecterius is quite common in Apulia in the eleventh century,<sup>109</sup> but his artistic taste was Byzantine. In fact, the figures of the Virgin and the child, represented on the icon, are of the Hodegetria type, though the style is not Greek.<sup>110</sup> Finally, there is the miniature of St. Symeon Stylites which the proximos Basil Bergês had painted on fol. 151<sup>v</sup> of cod. 947 of the Jacob Regenstein Library (Chicago). It is clear from the hand that the manuscript, a Greek evangelium, was written in the eleventh century in southern Italy,<sup>111</sup> but nothing more is known about Basil, the proximos, an officer of the tagmata.

It is as difficult to give a general picture of the cultural background and the education of the southern Italian aristocracy as it is for the Byzantine nobility of that period as a whole. Some were completely illiterate, as for instance George, a follower of St. Nilus, who was one tôn megalôn tou kastroû [Rossano] kai eugenôn anthrôpôn. He could neither read nor write. Nevertheless, as a monk, miraculously, he sang flawlessly.<sup>112</sup> Others were highly educated, as witness Argyros, son of Melês from Bari, who was, according to a contemporary, "sapientia et disciplina in Graeco et Latino usque ad unguem politus".<sup>113</sup> Having grown up in Constantinople he had acquired the habit of many Byzantine upper-class intellectuals of discussing dogmatic problems both privately and in public; and since he was a convinced Roman Catholic, he very soon came into conflict

with the Patriarch Michael Cerularius, who four times excluded him from communion.<sup>114</sup> Though bilingual, Argyros, as an imperial officer, always signed in Greek. Some of the privileges he issued, bearing his elegant and fluent signature, Argyros pronoiâ Theou magistros, bestês kai doux Italias, Kalabrias, Sikelias kai Paphlagonias ho Melês, have been preserved.<sup>115</sup> It is, however, rather interesting that he even signed in Greek the letter he sent to the famous Benedictine abbey of Farfa, associating himself with the monastery which he richly endowed.<sup>116</sup>

But not even all stratêgoi or katepans were literate. Basil Argyros Mesardonitês, though related to the imperial family,<sup>117</sup> was just able to write his name and titles in a clumsy hand,<sup>118</sup> while the signature of the stratêgos of Loukanîa, Eustathios Skepidês, is almost entirely written in capitals.<sup>119</sup> Obviously he was not an experienced writer. By way of contrast there is the eunuch Nikêtas, who was commander of the fleet sent by Nicephorus II Phokas against Sicily. In that campaign he was taken prisoner by the Arabs, and during his captivity in Africa he copied patristic texts competently (cod. Paris. Gr. 497).<sup>120</sup> In the case of local officials and dignitaries quite a number of their Greek or Latin signatures survive on legal documents from various towns in Apulia. Looking at them more closely, one understands that both, the ability to write and the elegance of the hand improved markedly, whether in Latin or Greek, in the course of the eleventh century. Moreover, it becomes quite evident that the archontes active in Bari as a rule write much better than their colleagues in other towns, whether native born or based there. Apparently, as the capital of the theme and residential town of the katepans, Bari had acquired not only a political, but also a cultural predominance. We may assume that most of these literate officials were locally educated, but we do not know how and by whom. Unfortunately, there is no comparable number of documents from Byzantine Reggio. Therefore there is no way of finding out, whether likewise a higher level of literacy existed among the imperial officials in the capital of the theme of Calabria.

While many Latin-born archontes in Apulia were attracted by Byzantine culture, other southern Italian aristocrats showed a certain interest in the culture of their neighbours: there was, for instance, an undisguised admiration for the advanced level of Arabic medicine. A person who was sick and could afford it, like Gaudiosos, tis archôn tôn lian periphânôn kai endoxôn, travelled to be healed by Arab doctors in Palermo.<sup>121</sup> In this connection it is quite interesting that the imperial prôtasekretis Constantine, a native of Reggio, in the eleventh century translated into Greek the medical compendium for travellers written by the African physician Abu Djafar (d.1004).<sup>122</sup>

Two hundred years of Byzantine government may not have been an altogether happy experience for the southern Italian population. According to the local chronicles in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, the Arab invasions and sudden attacks created an atmosphere of constant insecurity among the people and considerably damaged the economy.<sup>123</sup> Moreover, there were the Hungarian devastations, several invasions led by the Western emperors and the final Norman conquest. Normally the local military forces were not sufficient to cope with the situation, but whenever a more impressive army or fleet was sent from

Constantinople, it was generally defeated.<sup>124</sup> The Italians had good reason to feel that they were not adequately protected by the Byzantine Empire. On the other hand, the taxes paid to the imperial government may have been rather high, and were not used exclusively for the benefit of the provinces. Consequently, the southern Italian subjects of Byzantium, led by members of the local aristocracy, quite often revolted against their governors. In about 965 the magistros Nicephorus Hexakionitēs was preparing a naval campaign against Arab Sicily. When he ordered the population of the theme of Calabria to build ships and man them, he caused an insurrection in Rossano. The people did not want to be involved in aggression against Sicily, fearing Arab retaliation, and, led by the prōtospatharios Gregory Maleinos, who belonged to one of the best-known local families, they burnt the ships and killed the captains.<sup>125</sup> According to the Calabrian hagiographer of St. Nilus, who tells this story, the uprising was not directed against the emperor, but against an unpopular decision of the ambitious governor. The same attitude may have been the reason for the Apulian insurrection in 921 against the stratēgos Oursoleôn, which was strongly supported by Landulf, prince of Benevento. Landulf did not want to abolish the links with Byzantium entirely, for he needed the support of the imperial fleet against the Arabs, but certainly he hoped for more autonomy especially as far as the economy was concerned.

The revival of the western Roman empire in the second half of the tenth century offered the southern Italian population a new political alternative. When Otto II came to the south to fight the Arabs and, implicitly, the Greeks, he found a certain consensus, and not only in Apulia, where the cities of Bari and Trani supported him, but also in Calabria, where the local population was Greek.<sup>126</sup> In 1009, when Byzantium was completely involved in the war against Bulgaria, a new insurrection broke out in Apulia, headed by Melēs, a noble citizen of Bari. Skylitzes calls him dynastēs tis tōn epoikōn tēs Bareōs.<sup>127</sup> Melēs, also called Ismael, was not, judging from his name, of Lombard, but perhaps of Armenian origin.<sup>128</sup> He engaged some Norman knights, who had then started to come to southern Italy as mercenaries, to fight the Byzantine troops. His rebellion, which was definitely suppressed only in 1018 by the katepan Basil Boiōannēs, got strong political support from the western emperor Henry II. There is no way of knowing the main objective of Melēs's up-rising, but possibly he wanted to establish an independent state in Apulia, similar to the Lombard principalities and to the Campanian duchies of Naples and Amalfi, and to replace the Byzantine supremacy with that of the Western emperor. In fact, Henry II conferred on him the title of dux Apuliae and gave him asylum at his court in Bamberg after the failure of his insurrection.<sup>129</sup> Melēs's political outlook was clearly anti-Byzantine, but we do not know much about his political followers among the Apulian aristocracy. It is perhaps significant that he owed his initial military successes to the Norman mercenaries and not to local forces.

Except for these more spectacular rebellions, there are many other indications of political violence in Byzantine southern Italy. The three redactions of the annals of Bari, Annales Barenses, Lupus Protospatharius and Anonymus Barensis, contain quite a number of laconic and mysterious entries about the murderous political activities of the Apulian aristocracy: fight between Adralestos and Ismael

(960), killing of Ismael (975), killing of the bishop of Oria by the prōtospatharios Porfirius (979), killing of the prōtospatharios Sergios by the people of Bari (987), burning of the houses of John Ycanatus (1036 and 1047)<sup>130</sup> etc. Byzantine archontes of local or foreign origin murdered or were murdered. Sometimes the authors of the crime were punished by the katepan or exiled to Constantinople. Generally we neither know what all this violence was about, nor can we identify the various participants. It would, however, almost certainly be wrong to look for an explanation in terms of pro- and anti-Byzantine sentiments. Presumably, they were just battles for local power among the more important families of the city or of the province. In these fights everybody looked for suitable political allies, whether the Byzantine authorities, some Arab general, a Lombard prince or even the Western Emperor, and changed alliances in rapid succession. It would be an error to assume that men with Lombard names tended to foster a distinctively Italian policy, while others, called Theophylact or Adralestos, or bearers of Byzantine titles were pro-Byzantine. Melēs's name was not Lombard, nor was that of Argyrizzos, son of Iōannakēs, the head of the pro-Norman faction, who in 1071 delivered Bari to Robert Guiscard. Only a few months earlier, in March 1071, he had signed in Greek a document concerning the Monastery of St. Benedict in Bari as Argyros pronoia Theou patrikios anthypatos bestēs ho tou Iōannakē.<sup>131</sup>

After the fall of Bari, Robert Guiscard allowed the last katepan, Stephen Pateranos and other Byzantine officers who had been taken prisoner, to return to Constantinople.<sup>132</sup> But not all the Byzantine officials of non-Italian origin left. The topotērētēs Basil Mersyniotēs, judging from his name, a native from Cilicia, stayed. He was buried in Bari in October 1075 and the sarcophagus bearing his funerary inscription is now in the Museo of S. Nicola.<sup>133</sup> Families of the local aristocracy were even less inclined to leave. Many of the southern Italian archontes who had served the Byzantine government entered Norman service. The early Norman administration in southern Italy and Sicily depended essentially on these old Byzantine cadres. Several Maleinoi, members of the well-known Calabrian family, for instance, served the Norman counts and kings in Calabria and Sicily during the twelfth century.<sup>134</sup> In Apulia the situation was similar. The same families which held power in Byzantine times continued to run the cities. In Bari, especially, they continued, long after the Norman conquest, to mention their imperial offices and dignities and those of their fathers.<sup>135</sup> But since life was no better under the Norman rule, they rose against the Norman dukes just as they had from time to time against the Byzantines. The case of the Alferanites family is quite interesting: the prōtospatharios John tēs Alpheranas and his brother, the topotērētēs Byzantius, belonged to the staff of the katepan Basil Boiōannēs and were present at the foundation of Troia (1019).<sup>136</sup> In subsequent years we find other members of the family bearing Byzantine titles and involved in the power struggles in Bari.<sup>137</sup> Finally in the twelfth century it was Grimoald Alferanites who succeeded in creating for a short period the independent principatus barensis.<sup>138</sup> But his rebellion was crushed by Roger II in 1132; now the local aristocracy had even less success than under the Byzantines.

# NOTES

1. There is a letter written in 921 by the Patriarch Nicholas Mystikos "to the priests, archpriests, archontes and the general body of the people of Longobardia": Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters, ed. and trans. R.J.H. Jenkins and L.G. Westerink (Washington D.C. 1973), no. 85, pp.344-346. - In 1050, "an assembly of priests, archontes, the domestikos and the other domestikos, his son-in-law, and a large part of the rest of the city's population" gathered in the church of the archimandrite to be present at the reading of the will of the late abbot of Cersosimo (Basilicata): F. Trinchera, Syllabus Graecarum membranarum, Napoli 1865, no.37, pp.44-47.
2. V. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione bizantina nell'Italia meridionale dal IX all'XI secolo (Bari 1978), pp. 112-116.
3. Annales Bareses, Lupus Protospatharius, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH, SS V, pp. 53-59; Anonymi Barenensis Chronicon, ed. C. Pellegrini, Muratori, RIS V, pp.148-153; P. Schreiner, Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken I, (CFHB, XII, 1) pp. 332, 334, 338, 339.
4. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, pp. 178-209.
5. Trinchera, Syllabus, no.19, p. 20; G. Robinson, History and Cartulary of the Greek Monastery of S. Elias and S. Anastasius of Carbone (OC XV, 2), (Roma 1929), no. V-109, pp. 160-162.
6. Bios kai politeia tou hosiou patros hēmōn Neilou tou Neou, ed. G. Giovanelli (Grottaferrata, 1972) chap. 62, p. 103.
7. Vita di Sant'Elia il giovane, ed. and trans. G. Rossi Taibbi [Ist. sic. di studi biz. e neoellenici. Testi 7]. (Palermo, 1962), chap. 64, pp. 100-102. Michael is likely to have been the stratēgos of Calabria, Michael Charaktos. In fact, the title taxiarkhos, which does not belong to the administrative vocabulary of that period, is one of the epithets of the Archangel Michael.
8. Historia et laudes SS. Sabae et Macarii iuniorum e Sicilia, auctore Oreste patriarcha Hierosolymitano, ed. G. Cozza Luzi (Romae, 1893), p. 37.
9. Vita S. Eliae Spelaetiae abbatis, AASS, Sept. III, chap. 14 f., pp. 853 f. (the name of the wicked stratēgos is not given in the printed edition: von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, p. 101). Cf. chap. 54, p. 870.
10. Vita Gregorii abbatis prior, MGH, SS XV, 2, chap. 13, p. 1190.
11. Bios kai politeia Neilou tou Neou, chap. 70-72, pp. 110-112.
12. Vita S. Vitalis abbatis, AASS, Mart. II, p. 30; for the date: von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, pp. 200 f.

13. To give only a few examples from Greece: Vita et conservatio S. Patris nostri Petri episcopi Argivorum, ed. G. Cozza Luzi, (Patrum nova bibliotheca, IX, 3), Roma 1888, chap. 16, p. 11; Vita S. Lucae iunioris, in Migne, PG 111, cols. 464-469; Hō bios Nikōnos tou Metanoēite, ed. Sp. Lampros in Neos Hellēnom-nēmōn 3 (1906) pp. 172-175.
14. For a list of the stratēgoi and katepans see: von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, pp. 76-107, for their family background see: A. Guillou, 'Un document sur le gouvernement de la province. L'inscription historique en vers de Bari (1011)', in idem, Studies in Byzantine Italy. (London, 1970), VIII; J.-F. Vannier, Familles byzantines. Les Argyroi (IX<sup>e</sup>-XII<sup>e</sup> siècles) (Paris 1975); V. Laurent, 'Contributions à la prosopographie du thème de Longobardie', Byzantino-Sicula II. Miscellanea di scritti in memoria di Giuseppe Rossi Taibbi [Ist. sic. di studi biz. e neoellenici. Quaderni 8] (Palermo, 1975), pp. 307-319, and especially A.P. Kazhdan, Sostav, passim.
15. V. von Falkenhausen, I Bizantini in Italia, in G. Cavallo et al., I Bizantini in Italia (Milano, 1982), pp. 118-121.
16. N. Oikonomidēs, Les listes de préséance byzantines des IX<sup>e</sup> et X<sup>e</sup> siècles (Paris 1972), pp. 263, 354.
17. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, pp. 35, 80.
18. von Falkenhausen in I Bizantini in Italia, pp. 121-123.
19. Les nouvelles de Léon VI le Sage, ed. and trans. P. Noailles and A. Dain (Paris 1944), No 84, p. 285.
20. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 1, p. 1.
21. A. Guillou, Le brèbion de la métropole byzantine de Région (vers 1050), [Corpus des actes grecs d'Italie du sud et de Sicile. Recherches d'histoire et de géographie 4]. (Città del Vaticano, 1974), p. 191.
22. Skylitzes (ed. Thurn), p. 265.
23. C. Will, Acta et scripta quae de controversiis ecclesiae Graecae et Latinae saeculo XI conscripta extant (Leipzig-Marburg 1861), p. 161.
24. Lupus Protospatharius, p. 56: (985) descendit Romanus patriarchus cum filio suo; p. 57: (1029) venit Eustachius cum filiis ... et adduxit honorem catepani ad Christoforum. In his Taktika the Emperor Leo VI suggests that a stratēgos should take his sons with him on campaign to train them in military matters: Migne, PG 107, cols 1072ff.
25. Guillou, 'Un document', pp. 6-9, comes to his conclusion through the ingenious interpretation of Lupus Protospatharius's entry for the year 1017: Hoc anno obiit (abiit) in Butrunto Mesardoniti catepanus. Et in mense novembris

- interfectus est Leo, frater Argiro. Guillou translates: ... et, au mois de novembre, son frère Léon Argyros fut tué. Guillou is certainly right in assuming that the katepan Basil Mesardonitēs was a member of the Argyros family. But as, on the other hand, Argirus or Argyrus was a common first name in Bari (Codice diplomatico Barese, I, no. 7, p. 13: Leo filius Argeri (983); *ibid.*, IV, no. 42, p. 85; Trinchera, no. 11, p. 10; A. Guillou and W. Holtzmann, 'Zwei Katepansurkunden aus Tricarico', *Quellen u. Forschungen aus ital. Archiven u. Bibliotheken* 41 (1961) p. 18 (reprinted in: A. Guillou, *Studies in Byzantine Italy*, VII). Leo could easily be the brother of some local Argyrus. Moreover, Lupus Protospatharius very often switches abruptly from one argument to the other, and so the two sentences need not be connected (cf. the entries for the years 1000, 1009, 1010, 1014 etc); therefore Guillou's interpretation, in so far as it is based on the syntax, is not convincing either.
26. Argyros: cf. footnote 25; Kourkouas: Trinchera, *Syllabus*, no. 135, p. 179; no. 140, p. 187; Krēnitēs: A. Guillou, *Saint-Nicolas de Donno* (1031-1060/1061) [*Corpus des actes grecs*, 1], (Città del Vaticano, 1967); no. 4, p. 61; Trachanioti: *Codice diplomatico Barese*, VIII, no. 16 f., pp. 34-37; Malakinos: L.-R. Ménager, 'L'abbaye bénédictine de la Trinité de Mileto en Calabre à l'époque normande', *Bollettino dell'Archivio paleogr. ital.*, n.s. 4-5 (1958/59) p. 19; George Maniakes: Robinson, S. Elias and S. Anastasius of Carbone, no. X-59, p. 183, fn.8 (his name has not been transcribed by the editor).
  27. von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, pp. 57 f.; E. Kirsten, 'Troia. Ein byzantinisches Stadtgebiet in Süditalien', *Röm. hist. Mitteilungen* 23 (1981) pp. 245-270; J.M. Martin and G. Noyé, 'La cité de Montecorvino en Capitanate', *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome. Moyen âge - temps modernes* 94/2 (1982) pp. 513-549.
  28. Guillou, 'Un document', pp. 1-13.
  29. CIG IV, no. 8689.
  30. J.-M. Spieser, 'Inventaires en vue d'un recueil des inscriptions historiques de Byzance. I: les inscriptions de Thessalonique', *TM* 5 (1973) no. 13 f., pp. 163 f.; H. Belting, 'Byzantine Art among Greeks and Latins in Southern Italy', *DOP* 28 (1974) p. 24.
  31. *La cronaca siculo-saracena in Cambridge con doppio testo greco* edd. G. Cozza Luzi and B. Lagumina (Palermo 1890), p. 86.
  32. Guillou, *Saint-Nicolas de Donno*, no. 3, pp. 33-49.
  33. G. de Jerphanion, *Une nouvelle province de l'art byzantin. Les églises rupestres de Cappadoce*, II, 1, Paris 1936, pp. 333-351, 369-372; M. Restle, *Die byzantinischen Wandmalereien in Kleinasien*, I, Recklinghausen 1967, pp. 160-162, 164 f., III, fig. 467; A. Guillou, 'La Cappadocia: elementi specifici e caratteri generici di un area omogenea', in *Le aree omogenee della civiltà rupestre nell'ambito dell'Impero bizantino: la Cappadocia*, (Galatina, 1981) p. 427.
  34. *Bios kai politeia Nei ou tou Neon*, chap. 64 f., pp. 105 f.
  35. Guillou, *Le bràbion*, p. 179.
  36. *Bios kai politeia Neilou tou Neon*, chap. 71 f., pp. 111 f.; Belting in *DOP* 28 (1974), pp. 24 f.
  37. *Bios kai politeia Neilou tou Neon*, chap. 45, pp. 89 f., chap. 53, pp. 95 f., chap. 57, p. 98.
  38. *Codice diplomatico Barese*, I, no. 18, pp. 31 f.; Belting in *DOP* 28 (1974) p. 20.
  39. von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, pp. 200 f.
  40. M. Salvatore and N. Lavermicocca, 'Sculture altomedievali e bizantine nel Museo di S. Nicola di Bari. Note sulla topografia di Bari bizantina', *Riv. dell'Ist. naz. d'archeologia e storia dell'arte*, s. III, 3 (1980) pp. 104 f., fig. 13 a-c; M. Milella Lovecchio, 'La scultura bizantina dell'XI secolo nel Museo di S. Nicola di Bari', *Mélanges de l'Ecole Franç. de Rome. Moyen âge-temps modernes* 93/1 (1981) p. 77, fig. 48; R. Farioli Campanati, 'La cultura artistica nelle regioni bizantine d'Italia dal VI all'XI secolo', in G. Cavallo et al., *I Bizantini in Italia*, p. 261, fig. 169.
  41. Cf. the monograms in: G. Zacos and A. Vegler, *Byzantine Lead Seals*, I: *Plates* (Basel 1972), pl. 237, no. 306, pl. 239, no. 368. Milella Lovecchio, instead, reads *praktōra*; Salvatore and Lavermicocca read *Leopatus*, a name, which they attribute - one does not know why - to the katepan Pothos Argyros (1029-1032), whom they identify, quite arbitrarily, with the katepan Constantine Opos (1033-1038).
  42. Cf. the capitals of Fatih Camii at Tirilye on the southern shore of the sea of Marmara, published by C. Mango and I. Ševčenko, 'Some Churches and Monasteries on the Southern Shore of the Sea of Marmara', *DOP* 27 (1973) p. 237, fig. 12.
  43. von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, p. 85.
  44. J. Gay, *L'Italie méridionale et l'empire byzantin depuis l'avènement de Basile I<sup>er</sup> jusqu'à la prise de Bari par les Normands (867-1071)* (Paris, 1904), pp. 123-125, 141.
  45. *Ibid.*, pp. 139 ff.
  46. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-150; von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione*, pp. 23-25, 31 f.
  47. Skylitzes pp. 263 f.

48. Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters, no. 82, pp. 338-342, no. 85, pp. 344-346.
49. Liudprandi Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana, ed. J. Becker, MGH, SS in usum scholarum (Hannover, 1915), chap. 37, pp. 151 f.
50. Chronicon Salernitanum, ed. U. Westerbergh (Stockholm, 1956), chap. 172 f., pp. 175 f.
51. Peter of Argos, Epitaphios eis ton makarion Athanasion episkopon Methônês, ed. G. Cozza Luzi (Patrum nova bibliotheca IX, 3) (Roma, 1888), chap. 4, pp. 34 f.; Vita Josephi Hymnographi in Migne, P.G. 105, chaps. 4-6, cols. 941-945.
52. G. Musca, L'emirato di Bari (847-871), Bari 1978<sup>2</sup>, passim.
53. V. von Falkenhausen, 'I Longobardi nell'Italia meridionale', in Storia d'Italia UTET 3 (Torino, 1983), pp. 296-298.
54. Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters, p. XV.
55. Ibid., no. 54, pp. 292-294, 550 f., no. 75, p. 326, no. 82, pp. 338-342, no. 84, p. 344, no. 85, pp. 344-346, no. 103, p. 384.
56. Erchemperti Historia Langobardorum Beneventanorum, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS rerum Lang. et Ital., chap. 38, p. 249.
57. Chronicon Vulturense del monaco Giovanni, ed. V. Federici, II, (Fonti per la storia d'Italia, 59) (Roma, 1925), pp. 12-14.
58. Nicholas I, Patriarch of Constantinople, Letters, no. 103, pp. 384, 568.
59. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 4, pp. 3 f.; Le pergamene di Conversano, ed. G. Coniglio, (Codice diplomatico Barese 20) (Bari, 1975), no. 3, pp. 7 f. For the identification of Dalio, cf. V. von Falkenhausen, 'Problemi istituzionali, politico-amministrativi ed ecclesiastici della seconda colonizzazione bizantina', in La civiltà rupestre medioevale nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia. Ricerche e problemi. Atti del I convegno intern. di studi sulla civiltà rupestre (Genova, 1975), pp. 51 f., fn. 17.
60. Le pergamene di Conversano, no. 6, p. 13.
61. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, p. 26; A. Jacob, 'Une mention d'Ugento dans la chronique de Skylitzès', REB 35 (1977) pp. 229-235.
62. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 3, pp. 2 f.; L.B. Zekiyan, 'Le colonie armene del Medioevo in Italia e le relazioni culturali italo-armene', in Atti del I simposio intern. di arte armena - 1975 (Venezia, 1978), p. 830.

63. Le pergamene di Conversano, no. 5, pp. 11 f., no. 10, p. 23, no. 11, pp. 24 f., no. 14, pp. 30 f.; Codice diplomatico Barese I, no. 1, pp. 3 f., no. 3, pp. 6 f., no. 4, pp. 7 f., no. 8, pp. 14 f., no. 10, p. 18, et passim, Ibid., IV, no. 1, p. 4, no. 3, p. 8, no. 5, pp. 10-12, et passim.
64. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 25, p. 29; Le pergamene di Conversano, no. 2, p. 6, no. 3, p. 8, no. 5, p. 12, no. 6, p. 16, no. 9, p. 21, no. 10, p. 24, et passim; Codice diplomatico Barese I, no. 1, p. 4, no. 2, pp. 5 f., no. 14, p. 24, et passim; Ibid., IV, no. 1, p. 4, no. 5, p. 12, no. 9, p. 19, no. 11, p. 24, no. 15, p. 32, no. 17, p. 36, no. 20, p. 41, et passim.
65. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, p. 170.
66. Robinson, S. Elias and S. Anastasius of Carbone, no. III - 52, pp. 145-149: the tourmarkhês Leo Ankinarêsês signs a legal deed in 1043/44. His name has not been read by the editor of the document. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 49, pp. 64 f.: the tourmarkhês Euphemios Ankinarêsês is witness to a donation, made by a relative, the nun Helena Ankênariesna to the abbey of Cava (Rossano 1086).
67. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, p. 155. Maybe they were the Calabrian branch of the famous Byzantine family.
68. Ibid., pp. 155 f.
69. Le pergamene di Conversano, no. 32, pp. 71-73.
70. Ibid., no. 35, pp. 78 f.
71. G. Beltrani, Documenti longobardi e greci per la storia dell'Italia meridionale nel Medioevo (Roma, 1877) no. 13, pp. 18 f.; A. Prologo, Le carte che si conservano nello archivio del capitolo metropolitano della città di Trani (Barletta, 1877), no. 12, p. 44.
72. Beltrani, Documenti, nos. 18-20, pp. 27-32; Prologo, Le carte, nos. 18 f. pp. 58-61, no. 21, pp. 63 f.
73. Codice diplomatico Barese, IV, no. 27, pp. 57 f.
74. F. Ferruccio Guerrieri, Possedimenti temporali e spirituali dei Benedettini di Cava nelle Puglie, Trani, 1900, pp. 188-191. The editor was not able to read all the Greek signatures: V. von Falkenhausen, 'Taranto in epoca bizantina', Studi medievali, s. III, 9, 1 (1968) p. 163.
75. Codice diplomatico Barese, IV, no. 24, pp. 51 f. Porfirus is not a merchant (commerciant), as suggested by G. Musca, 'L'espansione urbana di Bari nel secolo XI', Quaderni medioevali, 2 (1976) p. 52, but a fiscal officer.
76. Le pergamene Conversano, no. 7, pp. 18 f.



77. Ibid., no. 10, pp. 22-24.
78. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 44, pp. 57 f. The document is undated: von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, pp. 115 f.
79. Anonymus Barensis, p. 151; Skylitzes (ed. Thurn), p. 440; von Falkenhausen in I Bizantini in Italia, p. 122.
80. Guillou, Le brébion, pp. 195 f.
81. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, p. 165; Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 59, pp. 69 f.
82. Annales Barenses, p. 54; Von Falkenhausen, 'Problemi istituzionali', p. 58 f. Magistrale, Notariato e documentazione in terra di Bari. Ricerche su forme, rogatari, credibilità dei documenti latini nei secoli IX-XI (Bari 1984), pp. 499 f.;
83. A. Guillou, 'La soie du katépanat d'Italie', TM/6 (1976) pp. 69-84 (reprinted in Idem, Culture et société en Italie Byzantine (VI<sup>e</sup>-XI<sup>e</sup> siècles) (London, 1978), XII).
84. Codice diplomatico Barese, IV, no. 32, pp. 67 f.
85. Robinson, S. Elias and S. Anastasius of Carbone, no. V-109, pp. 160-162.
86. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 25, pp. 27 f.
87. Ibid., no. 10, p. 9.
88. von Falkenhausen, 'I Longobardi nell'Italia meridionale', pp. 290 f.
89. Guillou, Le brébion, passim.
90. Le pergamene di Conversano, no. 3, pp. 7 f.
91. Robinson, S. Elias and S. Anastasius of Carbone, no. X-59, pp. 179-183.
92. There were all sorts of primikêrioi in the Byzantine empire; the title means only that the bearer was the head of some bureau or organization. In the eleventh century, however, the primikêrios was most likely to be a eunuch official of the emperor's household, the primikêrios tou kouboukleisiou or tou bestiariou: R. Guillard, 'Le primicier (ho primikêrios), le grand primicier (ho megas primikêrios)', REB 14 (1956) pp. 122-157; reprinted in Idem, Recherches sur les institutions byzantines, I (Berlin-Amsterdam, 1967), pp. 300-322.
93. Roma, Collegio Greco, unedited.
94. S.G. Merciat, C. Giannelli, A. Guillou, Saint-Jean-Théristès (1054-1264) [Corpus des actes grecs ... 5]. (Città del Vaticano, 1980), n. 1, pp. 39-41.

95. Fn. 57.
96. Guillou, Le brébion, pp. 166, 188, 193, 195.
97. Bios kai politeia Neilou tou Neou, chap. 71, p. 111; U. Balzani, Il Chronicon Farfense di Gregorio di Catino, II. [Fonti per la storia d'Italia, 34], (Roma, 1903), pp. 202 f.
98. Oikonomidès, Les listes de préséance, p. 332.
99. Lupus Protospatharius, p. 56; Anonymus Barensis, p. 150 f.
100. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 40., pp. 49-51.
101. The editor read kybernêtês.
102. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 15, pp. 15-17.
103. Robinson, S. Elias and S. Anastasius of Carbone, no. VIII-57, pp. 171-175.
104. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 48, pp. 53-55.
105. Codice diplomatico Barese, IV, no. 34, p. 74.
106. Ibid., no. 37, pp. 77f.
107. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 49, pp. 64 f.
108. Ménager, 'L'abbaye bénédictine de la Trinité de Mileto', p. 19.
109. Codice diplomatico Barese, I, no. 22, pp. 38 f.; ibid., IV, no. 27, pp. 56-59, no. 30, pp. 62-64; Beltrani, Documenti, no. 14, pp. 19-21, no. 17, pp. 25-27. There is, however, no need to identify the donor with the tourmarkhês Eleutherios, who signed in Greek a legal document of Trani (1039): Beltrani, Documenti, no. 14, p. 21.
110. Farioli Campanati, in I Bizantini in Italia, pp. 262, 268, fig. 117; Belting in DOP 28 (1974), p. 23.
111. G. Caballo, 'La cultura italo-greca nella produzione libraria', in I Bizantini in Italia, fig. 485. Instead of proximos Cavallo read Auximos.
112. Bios kai politeia Neilou tou Neou, chap. 32, pp. 78 f., chap. 35, p. 80.
113. H. Tritz, 'Hagiographische Quellen zur Geschichte Papst Leos IX.', Studi gregoriani 4 (1952) p. 361.
114. Will, Acta et scripta, p. 177.
115. von Falkenhausen, La dominazione, pp. 206-208. There is a facsimile of Argyros' signature in Trinchera, Syllabus, plate II, no. 42.

116. Balzani, Il Chronicon Farfense, pp. 202 f.
117. Guillou, 'Un document', pp. 3-10.
118. Trinchera, Syllabus, plate II, no. 16.
119. Guillou, Saint-Nicolas de Donnoso, p. 34.
120. K. and S. Lake, Dated Greek Minuscule Manuscripts to the Year 1200, IV, Boston 1937, plate 240.
121. Vita S. Eliae Spelaetotae, chap. 59 f., pp. 871 f.
122. G. Mercati, Notizie varie di antica letteratura medica e di bibliografia [Studi e Testi 31], (Città del Vaticano, 1917), p. 14.
123. Lupus Protospatharius, pp. 53-58; Anonymus Barensis, pp. 147-149; Schreiner, Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken, I, pp. 335-340; The Chronicle of Ahimaaz, ed. and transl. M. Salzman [Columbia University Oriental Studies, 18], (New York, 1924) (reprinted 1966), p. 88.
124. Lupus Protospatharius, pp. 54-58; Schreiner, Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken, I, pp. 338 f.
125. Bios kai politeia Neilou tou Neou, chap. 60-62, pp. 101-103.
126. Gay, L'Italie méridionale, pp. 330-335.
127. Skylitzes (ed. Thurn), p. 348.
128. von Falkenhausen in I Bizantini in Italia, p. 67.
129. Gay, L'Italie méridionale, pp. 400-413.
130. Lupus Protospatharius, pp. 54 f.; Anonymus Barensis, pp. 149-151.
131. Codice diplomatico Barese, IV, no. 45, p. 92.
132. Guillaume de Pouille, La geste de Robert Guiscard, ed. and trans. M. Mathieu [Ist. sic. di studi biz. e neoellenici, Testi 4] (Palermo, 1961), II, vv. 158-162, pp. 344 f.
133. Farioli Campanati in I Bizantini in Italia, p. 262, fig. 174.
134. Mercati, Giannelli, Guillou, Saint-Jean-Théristès, pp. 277 f.
135. Codice diplomatico Barese, I, no. 27, pp. 49-51; II, App. I, no. 6\*, p. 176; V, no. 3, pp. 7 f., no. 13, pp. 24-27, no. 16, pp. 31-33, no. 31 f., pp. 54-57.
136. Trinchera, Syllabus, no. 18, p. 18.
137. Anonymus Barensis, p. 151; Codice diplomatico Barese, I, no. 35, pp. 67-69; V. von Falkenhausen, 'I ceti dirigenti prenormanni al tempo della costituzione degli stati normanni nell'e'talia meridionale e in Sicilia', in G. Rossetti, Forme di potere e struttura sociale in Italia nel Medioevo (Bologna 1977), pp. 343 f.
138. F. Carabellese, L'Apulia ed il suo commune nell'alto Medio Evo (Bari 1905), pp. 393-407, 426-433.

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CHAPTER 13 - ARCHONS AND DYNASTS: LOCAL ARISTOCRACIES  
AND THE CITIES OF THE LATER BYZANTINE EMPIRE

Michael Angold

I

Towards the end of the tenth century the archontes of Sparta called in a wandering holy man, by the name of Nikon. They hoped that he would be able to rid their city of the plague. He came and diagnosed its cause as the presence of a Jewish colony in the city. He persuaded the archontes to have the Jews driven out. This seemed to do the trick. The people of the city were overjoyed at the way the saint had apparently delivered them from plague. To show their gratitude they agreed to help him build his own church in Sparta. They collected building materials, which they carried in procession to a corner of what had been in classical times the agora, but was now deserted. The archontes were less enthusiastic, for they were reluctant to allow the saint to build a church in the agora, which they used to play tzykanion - a kind of polo. They regarded it as their property. Opposition also came from one citizen who objected to the expulsion of the Jews and resented the loss of their cloth-making skills. His sudden death made an immense impression and the archontes relented. They granted Nikon the land he wanted; they found the wages for the masons hired to build the new church. Two of the archontes even donated an antique column apiece.<sup>1</sup>

This incident suggests that the archontes had a decisive role in the life of one provincial city. They took thought about how to rescue the city from the perils of plague. Their deliberations were carried on in the church of St Barbara, giving them a formal quality. They sought out the holy man; they agreed to the exile of the Jews; they gave their consent to the building of the new church; they helped with its construction. But who were these archontes? We know the names of some of them. The most prominent was John Malakenos, who was described as "not only the first citizen of the city of the Laconians, but of the whole of Hellas and the Peloponnese".<sup>2</sup> He and his family were clearly of more than local importance. Towards the end of Nikon's life he came under suspicion of contemplating going over to the Bulgarians. The Emperor Basil II (976-1025) sent two companies of troops to Sparta to seize him and to bring him under arrest to Constantinople. Before he was led off he asked Nikon to pray for him. He was to be released unharmed, but in the meantime the saint had died. In gratitude for his safe deliverance, which he attributed to the saint's intercession, he commissioned an icon of the saint. Malakenos was one of the archontes who provided a column for the building of St Nikon's church. The other came from the Rentakios family, which had been prominent in the Greek lands since

the early tenth century.<sup>3</sup> Another of the archontic families of Sparta was the Khoirosphaktes. A Michael Khoirosphaktes was described as "second to none in our country of Lakonia".<sup>4</sup> The Khoirosphaktes was a family which provided the Byzantine government with distinguished servants from the turn of the ninth to the twelfth century.

These examples suggest that the leading archontes of a city came from old established families with strong local interests, but maintaining ties with Constantinople and the imperial administration. This was certainly true of other important cities in the European provinces of the Byzantine Empire. If one finds a Malakenos holding a provincial governorship in southern Italy in the mid-tenth century, there is equally that Christopher - a native of Thessalonica - who was katepano of Byzantine Italy in the early eleventh century. Arrested along with John Malakenos by Basil II was the magistros Paul Bobos, the leading citizen of Thessalonica.<sup>6</sup>

News of their arrest prompted members of two of the most prominent archontic families of Adrianople - the Vatatzes and the Glabas - to go over to the Bulgarians.<sup>7</sup> Basil II's suspicions highlight the importance of the archontes; they confirm that they wielded considerable local power. They also prompt a series of questions. On what did their power rest? Were they just members of the leading families of a particular city? Is it not possible to provide any closer definition that this? An archon was technically the holder of an imperial commission. It is a term that is more or less the exact equivalent of dynatos, as it was defined in Romanos Lekapenos's chrysobull of 934,<sup>8</sup> where it was equated, in the first instance, with the holding of rank within the imperial administration. The definition given in the earlier chrysobull of 922 is, however, more useful, because the essence of being a dynatos is presented in terms of the capacity to bring influence to bear upon others.<sup>9</sup> It catches the informal side of the exercise of power in Byzantium. Those responsible for framing imperial legislation in the tenth century had to provide very general definitions because conditions varied widely through the Empire. Those who wielded influence in the eastern provinces of the Empire were the great landowning families who controlled the Anatolian themes from their country estates. The pattern in the European provinces was different. The leading families from the beginning congregated in the cities, which were the strongpoints from which the reconquest of Macedonia and the Greek lands was effected. Like their counterparts in the East the military organization provided them with a basis of power. The evidence of the so-called cadaster of Thebes suggests that in the early eleventh century many of the archontes of the city held military rank. This was still the case at Adrianople later in the century, simply because Adrianople continued to be the centre of the Western armies.

In other parts of the European provinces of the Empire the military organization was allowed to lapse. Instead of holding military rank the archontes of Thebes increasingly enjoyed court titles. What this tells us is that the archontes played an important role in local government, whether it was on the military or the administrative side. Rarely would they hold the highest ranks, but lesser office would gravitate towards them. Local government depended upon their cooperation and that was one of the foundations of

their influence. Local administration in the European provinces was based on the cities and it was here that the archontes were naturally established.

The archontes might be described as thematikoi and ktematikoi.<sup>10</sup> This should not be taken to mean that there were two classes of archontes. It simply emphasizes that their power rested, on the one hand, on the local provincial administration and, on the other, on their estates. Nor does it indicate that the allegiance of the archontes was rather to their province or theme than to any city. The city where the archon resided is carefully noted. It would be true to say, though, that each province had network of cities, held together by the ties uniting the archontes of different cities. The cadaster of Thebes reveals that not all the landowners in the surrounding area were resident in Thebes. Some lived in Khalkis on the island of Euboea and others at Athens.<sup>11</sup> As we shall see, the city of Adrianople was at the centre of the network of cities in Thrace.

The nearest English equivalent to the archontes would be the gentry. There are the same difficulties in providing a precise definition. Both were landowning groups; both were responsible for much of local government. The main difference seems to have been that the archontes were closely attached to cities, which was not the case with the gentry.

## II

This has been to evade the important question of what do we mean by a city in a Byzantine context. We can hardly establish the place of the archontes in the Byzantine city before examining its development, shape, and structure. As is well known, city life more or less disappeared in the Byzantine Empire in the course of the seventh century, with the exception of Constantinople itself and one or two other places, such as Thessalonica and Nicaea. The cities of Greece were abandoned in the face of Slav infiltration. The city of Sparta was deserted by its inhabitants, some of whom sought the safety of Monemvasia. There was a progressive reoccupation of the old sites from the early ninth century, when the ancient cities became the centres for the reconquest of the Greek lands. At Sparta, for instance, the acropolis was refortified and the cathedral rebuilt, but the agora, as we have seen, was left unoccupied. This was also the pattern at Corinth and Athens. It was only in the eleventh century that their agorai began to be built over, and the same is probably true at Sparta, as well.<sup>12</sup> This growth of the Greek cities was associated with the appearance of manufactures. Corinth and Thebes produced silks; Athens produced the soap and dyes that were essential for the manufacture of silk. Corinth, in addition, was a centre of pottery- and glass-making. At least, to begin with, the Jews had an important role to play in bringing manufactures to the cities of Greece. The presence of Jews at Sparta, engaged in cloth-making, suggests a similar pattern of development there.

The term 'city' should probably be reserved for a number of places of substantial size, by which one means only places with a population of a few thousands - places that were distinguished not merely by the presence of a bishop, but also functioned as centres of

administration, commerce, and manufactures. It is difficult to give a more precise definition because the Byzantines themselves tended not to make any clear distinctions. The term 'kastron' was employed indiscriminately for walled settlements, great and small. Most kastra, however small, would have had their archontes, though their importance, even locally, would have varied with the size of the kastron. Much later, in the middle of the fourteenth century, we have the example of the kastron of Phanari in Thessaly, where the archontes owed service to the local landowner.<sup>13</sup> In this paper I shall concentrate on the archontes of places of some size, using, in the first instance, surviving buildings as a reflection of wealth and substance.

The wealth of a city, such as Athens, in the eleventh and twelfth century is apparent from the large number of churches - some of them, by Byzantine standards, imposing - which were built in and around the city at that time. The cities in other parts of the Empire were less precocious. The cities of Western Asia Minor, such as Smyrna, Ephesus, Pergamon, Sardis, and Nymphaion, seem only to have experienced similar growth for a brief period in the first half of the thirteenth century. The cities of Macedonia and Epirus, Serres and Joannina, for example, prospered from the middle of the thirteenth century down until the middle of the fourteenth. A city, such as Thessalonica, had always been of considerable importance. It inherited imposing churches and other public buildings from the fifth century. Apart from the church of our Lady of the Copper Smiths, which was put up in 1028, these seems to have been little new building until the early fourteenth century, when a series of impressive churches were built. The timing of prosperity varied from region to region, but the characteristic shape and structure of the Byzantine city was established in the course of the eleventh century. There is thereafter a unanimity about contemporary descriptions of the social divisions, whether of a great city, such as Thessalonica, or a small centre, such as Melnik. At the top came the archontes, then there were the soldiers, followed by the oikodespotai or householders, and finally there were the people (demos or laos).<sup>14</sup>

The position of the soldiers will be considered in detail later. The householders represent that group that is referred to as the middle class (mesoi). Some will have been engaged in trade and business; others were rentiers, owning agricultural property in the neighbourhood of the city and urban property within its walls. Some had substantial wealth.<sup>15</sup> In material terms it would have been difficult to distinguish between a rich householder and a lesser archon.

We have one or two inventories of archontic property. There is, for instance, that of Goudeles Tyrannos, an archon of Nymphaion in western Asia Minor, dating from March 1294. It is instructive, even if it is not possible to claim that it is typical. He owned agricultural estates outside the city. Within it he owned a considerable amount of house property, some of which he mortgaged for the sum of 420 hyperpyra. He also owned a part share in a perfumery. Four workshops selling cloth and a tower containing a bakery and a workshop brought him in an annual rent of 200 hyperpyra.<sup>16</sup> He clearly derived considerable revenues from the business of the city. Does this mean that the archontes promoted the economic interests of the

city. Yes, in the sense that it provided an outlet for the products of their estates. The precocious development of the Greek cities owed something to the activities of Venetian merchants, which the archontes were happy to encourage. In the mid-twelfth century, for example, we find a Venetian buying up large quantities of olive oil from the archontes of Sparta, to be forwarded to Constantinople.<sup>17</sup> At Thebes the archontes appear to have contributed directly to the growth of silk manufactures, simply because it seems to have in the hands of women from archontic families.<sup>18</sup> Given the much earlier example of the Widow Danielis at Patras, whose household produced large quantities of cloth, then the Theban example may not have been an isolated instance of the archontic household serving as a centre of production. But more important were almost certainly those tiny workshops supporting an artisan and his family, such as those found at Corinth.<sup>19</sup> Even here the archontes stood to gain, because it was the sort of property they rented out. They possessed a clear interest in promoting trade and manufactures, but this should not lead to exaggerated expectations about the potential for economic growth. The city was there to cater for the needs of a few dozen families. It was tied to the interests of the archontes. Any sustained economic growth was likely to undermine their position.

Normally speaking, the archontes were motivated by family interest rather than by any thought for the common good. This was emphasized by the way they concentrated their property within a city, not only in particular quarters, but even around special courtyards (aulai): these were complexes consisting of a dwelling house for the family and various dining and reception halls, but along with these were lettings and workshops.<sup>20</sup> The houses of the archontes seem always to have been sited in the main city, but the term kastrenoi, which is often used, has suggested to some modern historians that the archontes lived apart from the rest of the city up in the citadel. The trouble is that kastrenoi does not quite mean archontes. The kastrenoi were the people of the kastron or fortress; and kastron was the term usually employed for a city. All the evidence suggests that the citadel was the preserve of the governor and his retinue. John Cantacuzenus has left us a graphic description of the city of Servia in northern Thessaly under the western slopes of Mount Olympus. It was divided into three parts by a series of walls. It looked, in his words, "as though three cities had been superimposed on top of one another".<sup>21</sup> The citadel was reserved for the governor, but otherwise the physical divisions of the city did not correspond to any social divisions. The archontes did not separate themselves from the rest of society. At Thessalonica it was only in a time of emergency that the archontes sought refuge in the citadel.

Whatever the size of a city it was usually divided between a citadel and a walled lower town. The imperial governor was a fairly remote figure: the account preserved in the *Timarion*<sup>22</sup> of the progress of the governor of Thessalonica and his retinue to the church of St Demetrios to celebrate the saint's festival is testimony to the impression it made of pomp and splendour, but the sarcastic tone only underlines the isolation of an imperial governor from local society. It was his job to maintain law and order and to ensure that the taxes came in on time.

The imperial governor was a distant figure - rarely holding

office for more than a year. The bishop, often to his dismay, was a permanent appointment. He was one of the key figures within the city. As urban life revived, so the strength and influence of the bishop increased.<sup>23</sup> His power was all the greater because the notarial organization within the city was attached to the episcopal administration.<sup>24</sup> Documents drawn up by the notaries would be registered in the episcopal archives. The primmikerios of the notaries was one of the bishop's officers or archontes. It might be assumed that the episcopal archontes would naturally be drawn from the archontic families of a city, but it is very hard to establish this. It seems that the episcopal archontes formed a group of families on their own. In some bishoprics, Athens, for example, the offices of the episcopal administration were hereditary in particular families. They could be passed on, even if the heir had not been ordained. In that case, he would find a deputy, while he pocketed the perks and salary that went with the office.<sup>25</sup> These came from the revenues of the episcopal estates. Increasingly it became the practice for bishops to obtain from the emperor a chrysobull giving their estates special privileges and protection. This, in turn, would have tended to mark off the episcopal archontes as a distinct group within the city.

The example of both Eustathios of Thessalonica and Michael Choniates demonstrates that at times of crisis the bishop acted as the real leader of the city. Both these men saw their responsibilities, as extending to the whole community. They were not just spokesmen for the archontes, who they might well rebuke for their greed and factiousness. Michael Choniates was appalled by the behaviour of the archontes of Khalkis on the island of Euboea. There was a lack of order which contrasted with the self-discipline of the Latins: "One sees Celts, Germans, and Italians assembling in an orderly fashion and debating with a sense of decorum, but, as for the Byzantines, they get infuriated at the slightest pretext and reduce any meeting called for the common good to a shambles."<sup>26</sup> This might be seen as the travail associated with the creation of communal institutions, but it was also a concomitant of the pursuit of family interest, which has already been noted. It would seem that the Byzantines preferred to leave their affairs and the play of different interests in the hands of 'politicians'. Eustathios of Thessalonica has left a vivid portrait of their activities: "All public affairs pass through their hands, as well as private, for it is their own self-interest which normally makes them take heed for the common good. Thousands frequent them at all hours over all manner of business: marriages, commerce, and every conceivable kind of transaction."<sup>27</sup> From these 'politicians' might emerge a dynast - a local lord capable of dominating and soothing internal rivalries. His power was entirely unofficial. Only exceptionally are his activities recorded.

### III

Quite by accident the name of the dynast of the Thessalian port of Demetrias has been preserved in a story told by Kekaumenos.<sup>28</sup> He was Noah - a Constantinopolitan, whose business skills recommended him, as a man capable of fostering the interests of a port. The port of Raideustos on the sea of Marmora was in the hands of a dynast from



the powerful Vatatzes family in the middle of the eleventh century.<sup>29</sup> Raideostos was the outlet for the corn of Thrace. It was very much in the interests of the archontes of the Thracian cities that one of their number should dominate Raideostos.

The appearance of the dynast corresponded, in part, to the need to protect the interests of a city against outsiders, often in the shape of the imperial government. It was in such circumstances that dynasts normally appear before the light of history. One such incident occurred at Larissa in Thessaly in the reign of Constantine X Doukas (1059-1067). There was general indignation at the way the imperial government had slapped a surcharge on the basic land-tax. The archontes of the city plotted rebellion with the local Vlach chieftains, but they needed somebody to lead the uprising. The head of the most prominent family in Larissa was Nikoulitzas Delphinias, a relative of Kekaumenos. He was induced - under duress, so it was claimed - to take charge of the rebellion. It soon fizzled out; and Delphinias was to land up in jail in distant Amaseia.<sup>30</sup> Its interest lies in the way it shows how a dynast might be made: to protect local interests.

A more serious rebellion occurred some fifteen years earlier in 1047. It was centred on the city of Adrianople. It was led by Leo Tornikios, who came from the greatest family of the city. He had connections at court and was related to the reigning Emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042-1055). He fell out with the emperor and was forced to become a monk - there were elements of a family quarrel. This happened at a time when the archontes of Adrianople were enraged by the policy followed by the imperial government. It involved settling Petcheneks in the Balkans, while cutting back on the western armies. The archontes induced Leo Tornikios to lead their rebellion and got their agents to spirit him away from Constantinople.<sup>31</sup> This revolt failed and the leadership of Adrianople passed into the hands of the Bryennios and Tarkhaneiotas families. The government of Michael VII Doukas (1071-1078) favoured the latter. Its head Katakalon Tarkhaneiotas was made katepano of Adrianople, while Nicephorus Bryennios was sent away as governor first of Bulgaria and then of Dyrrakhion on the Adriatic coast.<sup>32</sup> The Bryennios faction at Adrianople led by Nicephorus's brother John started plotting to take over the city. Katakalon Tarkhaneiotas appealed to the imperial government for help. None was forthcoming, so he came to terms with the Bryennioi. This was the work of Nicephorus and John Bryennios's mother - a member of the Vatatzes family. She was able to arrange a marriage between Katakalon Tarkhaneiotas's sister and John Bryennios's son. Nicephorus Bryennios was persuaded to return to Adrianople and head a rebellion. At first, he refused to allow himself to be proclaimed emperor until his candidature had been put to a council at Adrianople composed of military commanders and archontes. In fact, his brother so arranged it that he was acclaimed emperor the moment he got to Traianoupolis near the mouth of the river Maritsa - the first substantial place controlled by the Bryennioi along the Via Egnatia. Nicephorus insisted on calling an assembly of archontes as soon as he reached Adrianople. He did this both to obtain their recognition and to agree upon the objectives of the rebellion.<sup>33</sup> If an attack launched on Constantinople in the autumn of 1077 was not a success, he continued to control Thrace until the spring of the next year, acting very much as an independent ruler, handing out court

titles to his followers.<sup>34</sup>

These rebellions centred on Adrianople have unique features. Adrianople was the centre of the military organization of the western armies. It was also within easy striking distance of Constantinople. Adrianople was hardly a typical Byzantine city, but these rebellions do reveal the power that was exercised by the leading families. It was the network of family ties, which brought the cities of Thrace over to the Bryennioi. The historian Michael Attaleiates has left us a graphic account of what happened at Raideostos. He happened to be there at the time that the rebellion broke out. His loyalties were not with the Bryennioi, but for the time being with the imperial government. He was a civil servant, but through his wife's family he had acquired an interest in some property in Raideostos and bought up more. He was an interloper and at odds with the wife of the dynast, who came from the Vatatzes family. He found the gates of the town barred against him. He went to Vatatzina and threatened to attack her with his retinue, if she did not let him depart in peace. She let him go, but his property suffered at the hands of the rebels. The Vatatzes family were related to the Bryennioi and held the city of Raideostos for them.<sup>35</sup> There was little that an outsider, such as Michael Attaleiates, could do.

It was Alexius Comnenus who was responsible for crushing Nicephorus Bryennios's rebellion, but, when he came to the throne, he was careful to respect the power and influence of the archontic families of Adrianople. He had after all been proclaimed emperor at Adrianople and perhaps even crowned there. Nicephorus Bryennios was left in control of Adrianople until his death towards the end of the century, by which time his grandson was married to the emperor's eldest daughter, Anna Comnena. This was one way of bringing the greatest family of Adrianople within the Comnenian fold. Alexius did not forget that the Bryennioi were just one of the archontic families of Adrianople. In dealing with the city he was careful on occasion to convoke assemblies of archontes, in order to ensure their co-operation.<sup>36</sup> Adrianople was, for reasons which have been given, something of an exception, but with other cities too Alexius Comnenus followed the practice of calling assemblies together. This happened, for instance, in 1094 at the Black Sea port of Ankhialos during the war against the Cumans. Part of the strength of Alexius's government was that he recognized the realities of local power.<sup>37</sup>

This understanding began to break down in the later twelfth century, when imperial power not only became weaker, but also more arbitrary.<sup>38</sup> The upshot was a series of rebellions, which once again reveal that many cities were in the hands of dynasts. Nauplion in the Argolid, for example, was controlled by Leo Sgouras, but it was a position that he had inherited from his father,<sup>39</sup> who must have been dynast of Nauplion in the reign of Manuel Comnenus. This would seem to be an isolated incident of a Greek city in the hands of a dynast at this time, were it not that we know quite by accident that the Thessalian port of Halmyros had its dynast under Manuel Comnenus.<sup>40</sup> When at the end of the twelfth century one suddenly finds in all parts of the Empire cities controlled by dynasts,<sup>41</sup> it is only possible to conclude that this had been the case all the time and was not just a product of the political chaos of the time. It was only that it was exactly such conditions, which drew the attention of the

historians of the time to the existence of dynasts. In more peaceful conditions they could be ignored - part of that informal network of power which underlay the imperial administrative system at Byzantium. That was the difficulty: their authority was informal. It had no legal basis. Even the city had no legal personality, but this would change with the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204.

The Frankish conquerors hastened to come to terms with the cities and their lords, as the price of a swift conquest. The rights of the archontes were recognized.<sup>42</sup> Particularly illuminating is the text of the Pactum adrianopolitanum, which was drawn up in 1206 between the Venetian podestà in the Latin Empire of Constantinople and representatives of the city of Adrianople.<sup>43</sup> The Venetians wished only to preserve their rights of suzerainty over the city. They recognized that the city was autonomous under its capitaneus, the Caesar Theodore Branas. He held this position 'secundum successionem', which suggests that he had inherited the position. Capitaneus is, of course, a western title. Exactly which Byzantine titles it was translating is difficult to say. Dynast is the most likely. As capitaneus Theodore Branas swore to uphold Venetian rights in the city and to protect any Venetians who might reside in or visit the city. But Branas was not the only Byzantine to take such an oath. Michael Kostomoiros also did so on behalf of the 'noble inhabitants of the land', whose delegate he was. It is an indication of the continuing power of the archontes. Their consent was necessary to the agreement made with the Venetians. They would have had the keenest interest in the main obligation that the city owed its new master - to provide a contingent of five hundred cavalry.

This document raises several problems. Were the Venetians imposing western norms upon Byzantine society or were they simply taking over existing conditions? The grant of imperial privileges to cities before 1204 was exceptional. It is true that various Byzantine cities claimed to have privileges, when they were negotiating with the Latins, but these were most likely to have been customary rights, rather than ones enshrined in an imperial chrysobull. It is not clear whether the chrysobull that Michael Choniates invoked as barring entry into Athens to the imperial governor was made out to the city or to the archbishop himself.<sup>44</sup> What is certain is that it was only after 1204 that it became common for cities to be granted chrysobulls. The Nicaean Emperor John Vatatzes (122-1254) granted the cities of Macedonia a whole series of chrysobulls, as the price of their submission.<sup>45</sup> As in so many other respects, the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204 and the period of exile which followed crystallized changes that had been occurring earlier. In this instance, custom and informal authority were given legal recognition.

Perhaps the most interesting stipulation of the Pactum adrianopolitanum was the demand for the military service of five hundred cavalry. Urban autonomy seemed to be conditional upon military service. This calls to mind one of the late Professor Ostrogorsky's most cherished ideas: that the holders of military pronoiai were the equivalent of the gentry class in the West.<sup>46</sup> This might seem to conflict with the view that it was the archontes of the Byzantine cities who came closest to a gentry class. As so often, Professor

Ostrogorsky is right, but for the wrong reasons. Professor Ostrogorsky was content to equate a pronoia-holder with a western knight. It is quite clear that in the mid-twelfth century, when the Emperor Manuel Comnenus embarked on a radical extension of the pronoia system, pronoia-holders were drawn from all sections of society.<sup>47</sup> It is equally true that by the middle of the thirteenth century many pronoia-holders belonged to the archontic ascendancy of different cities. This is most clearly seen at Smyrna, where members of archontic families seem to have been willing to surrender their family estates to receive them back as pronoiai. This was not so strange a procedure as it appears at first sight. The creation of pribiuvau was a threat to family property, because in theory an emperor could turn any property paying taxes to the state into pronoiai. Although the legal position was not absolutely clear, there was a strong possibility that the owners of that property would become the paroikoi of the pronoia-holder. Turning family property into a pronoia guarded against this danger. There were, in addition, the rewards of a military career. The one real drawback was that the pronoia was a conditional property. There was agitation against this. Michael Palaiologos recognized its force and gave in to it in 1259, making pronoiai inheritable.<sup>48</sup> In this way, the military organization based upon the pronoia came to centre on the cities. It may be that this had already happened before 1204 at Adrianople. It was an important military centre in the late twelfth century and it was around such bases that pronoiai were initially created.

Because of their military importance new officers were created for the cities - the kastrophylax and the prokathemenos. They only became prominent after 1204, but they were probably a creation of the Comnenian era. The kastrophylax was in charge of the garrison and the prokathemenos was the governor, both were appointed by the emperor. If the city of Smyrna is anything to go by, then they were usually drawn from the archontes of the city. Much local business went before a tribunal composed of the prokathemenos and other archontes of the city. In this way, a city clearly enjoyed a considerable degree of autonomy, whether it possessed an imperial chrysobull or not.<sup>49</sup>

A comparatively large number of the cities in the European provinces of the Empire received imperial chrysobulls from the middle of the thirteenth century. It seems almost to have been the price of their return to the Empire. When Monemvasia returned to the Byzantine Empire in 1262 it received a chrysobull, as did Joannina in 1319. The original chrysobull for Monemvasia made out by Michael VIII Palaiologos has not survived, only its confirmation by Andronikos II Palaiologos of 1284. It is a rather bland document, providing little more than generalities. It exempted the inhabitants as a whole from the payment of taxes on their landed property and from the payment of kommerkion - a combined sales-tax cum customs duty - on transactions in Monemvasia itself.<sup>50</sup> Later imperial grants to Monemvasia are scarcely more help. Andronikos II's chrysobull for Joannina is a much more detailed document. Its inhabitants too were exempted as a body from the payment of kommerkion and taxes on their landed property. But it was also concerned to uphold local customs, such as the right of the community to destroy the house of a traitor to the city. The power of the imperial administration within the city was to be limited by its representatives. 'Good men' were to be

elected by the inhabitants to act as judges and assessors on the imperial governor's court. Military service was a major concern. It was regulated in such a way that the people of Joannina were not exploited. They were not expected to serve away from the city, unless they were the holders of pronoiai. Even more important was the question of landholding. The custom was maintained that the property held by the kastrenoi, as they were called, in the surrounding countryside could not be alienated to outsiders, but must pass to other members of the community.<sup>51</sup>

The use of the term kastrenoi presents us with a number of problems. As we have seen, it is a word that signifies the inhabitants of the city as a whole and does not simply apply to the archontes. The citadel of Joannina, at the time, was so cramped<sup>52</sup> that it is difficult to conceive of it as a place of residence for the archontic families. There is one detail which suggests that the privileges applied to the whole community, rather than to a single section - and it is in itself quite remarkable: it was stipulated that the Jews of the city should enjoy the same privileges as the kastrenoi.

There seems to be no doubt that the bestowal of an imperial chrysobull upon a city had the effect not just of giving it a legal identity, but also of creating a privileged community. How did this affect the position of the archontes within the community? One knows, for instance, at Monemvasia that power continued to rest in the hands of its triumvirate of archontic families - the Eudaimonoioannes, Mamonas, and Sophianos. At the end of the fourteenth century the head of the Mamonas family, Paul, was dynast of Monemvasia, having inherited the position from his father.<sup>53</sup> This would seem to show that the grant of a chrysobull to the city had not weakened the hold of the archontic families. It is impossible not to suspect that the archontes were the real beneficiaries. In terms of the classical Greek city state the Byzantine city came much closer to tyrannies and oligarchies than to democracies.

#### IV

To the early fourteenth century there is a broad picture of urban growth, not just economically and demographically, but also institutionally. There seemed to be the potential for municipal government. The archontes had annexed various imperial appointments and had apparently created their own tribunal. They also had their own ad hoc assemblies. There are no indications of social discontent. This hardly prepares us for the events of the fourteenth century and the growing bitterness produced by archontic power. What were the causes of the strains within the Byzantine cities? Did it have anything to do with the contrast between power in the hands of a small group of families and the ideal of the community enshrined in the chrysobulls?

There was growing disorder in the cities, of which the government of Andronikos II was well aware. In the chrysobull of 1319 to Joannina one important exception was made to the rule that the imperial governor was to have no right to exile any citizen of Joannina, great or small; he was to drive out any agitator, for "such

lawless, rabble-rousing, troublemakers"<sup>54</sup> paralysed the harmony and good order, which ought to exist within a city. What they were agitating about is another matter. It was, superficially at least, more likely to be over political issues. In 1321 there was a party in Thessalonica led by twenty five agitators, who wished to hand the city over to the young Andronikos. The imperial governor received orders from the young man's grandfather, the Emperor Andronikos II, to round them up and send them in chains to Constantinople. He acted too late. The leaders of the conspiracy had already started the church bells ringing. This was pre-arranged signal which brought the people out on to the streets. They rushed to storm the governor's palace, but he got away to the citadel. The mob was out of control: they killed or threw into jail those who were considered opponents; they plundered the mansions of supporters of the imperial government.<sup>55</sup>

It seemed to presage the excesses of the Zealot uprising some twenty years later. But, on this occasion, men of standing recovered control of the situation. When the imperial governor was handed over to the young Andronikos, this was done by a deputation composed of the archbishop and an ex-abbot of the powerful Athonite monastery of the Lavra together with representatives of the senate and army of Thessalonica - these were the people who held the reins of power within the city.<sup>56</sup> The senate of Thessalonica was composed of the body of archontes. It was a convenient term for the archontes as a group, though it is also true that they would assemble from time to time, not apparently on any regular basis. It would seem, however, that a section of the archontes of Thessalonica was using the mob as a political weapon. A contemporary realized that they were playing with fire and foresaw the day when the mob might turn against them. His uneasiness was intensified by the oppression of the poor which he saw around him in Thessalonica.<sup>57</sup> His disquiet about the state of society was shared by others. The rich and powerful were not carrying out their social duties towards the poor; they exploited the imperial government for their own ends.

Only a spark was needed to set off this volatile mixture. It was provided by John Cantacuzenus's usurpation of the imperial dignity in 1341. He came to symbolize the oppression of the poor and the perversion of imperial justice by the powerful. At Adrianople and Thessalonica the willingness of the archontes to surrender their cities to the usurper was the signal for popular uprisings. At Thessalonica it led in 1342 to the establishment of the so-called Zealot regime. It remains one of the most mysterious episodes in Byzantine history. But some things are clear. The Zealots were a relative small group - at an earlier period they would have been described as agitators by the authorities. They were largely drawn from the solid middle class, as their arch-enemy John Cantacuzenus accidentally reveals.<sup>58</sup> They could count on popular support, most notably from the sailors of Thessalonica, who had their own organization.<sup>59</sup> The leaders of the Zealots came from the fringes of the archontic families of the city. Two of them, Michael and Andrew, were members of an obscure branch of the imperial house of Palaiologos. A third came from the Kokalas family. His christian name was George. John Cantacuzenus records that he changed his allegiance frequently. It was his deviousness - or presence of mind - which helped to restore the Zealot regime in 1345. He organized the attack

upon the archontes who had taken refuge in the citadel. The mob was soon out of control, seeking victims among the archontes. They even came to Kokalas's house, believing rightly that he was sheltering one of the archontes, who happened to be his brother-in-law. He handed him over rather than expose himself to the mob's fury.<sup>60</sup> Kokalas was a shadowy, not to say shady, character. He is almost identical with a George Kokalas, who some years earlier had been involved in an intrigue against Syrgiannes, one of the Andronikos III's supporters. Kokalas was the least distinguished of the group, but the author of the pamphlet that reveals its activities pays more attention to Kokalas than to any of the others. He was described, with a fair measure of irony, as "a quiet sort of a chap, devoting his life to justice, hating uproar and upheaval, so detesting night-birds that he dupes them into breaking and entering some rich house. While they are carrying out the robbery, he stays outside by the point of entry, keeping guard. When, the robbery over, he hears them come creeping out, he bares his sword and seizing them by the hair cuts off their heads, showing no mercy."<sup>61</sup> This was clearly a famous incident, which shows that George Kokalas was connected with some dubious elements. He was exactly the sort of 'politician' who would seek to exploit a popular movement for his own ends.

This must not be taken to mean that the Zealots were motivated by nothing more than self-interest. Even if the so-called anti-Zealot discourse has nothing whatsoever to do with the Zealots - and this is by no means certain<sup>62</sup> - they aimed at creating a regime, which was for the common good. They sought to end the oppressions of the archontes. But where did their support come from? We have seen that they could rely on the organization of sailors, but this was not the only popular organization; there was, for instance, a guild of building workers. In 1327 the protomaistor of this guild was called upon to fix the price of a property that one of the archontes of the city of Thessalonica was selling.<sup>63</sup> He clearly had some official position. The appearance of trade and craft organizations in Thessalonica must have created a new political situation within the city. It was challenge to the position of the archontes. This may also have been the case at Adrianople.

In 1341 John Cantacuzenus sent messages to the city of Adrianople, demanding recognition as emperor. There was a public meeting dominated by the archontes, who were all for accepting Cantacuzenus. there was some dissent on the part of the representatives of the people, but they were whipped out of the meeting. In the night one Branos and two accomplices roused up the people and they drove the archontes from the city. Cantacuzenus describes Branos as a labourer, but as Paul Magdalino points out,<sup>64</sup> the emperor made a habit of slighting the social position of his opponents. Branos belonged to a higher social grouping than the emperor was willing to allow. He possessed a fine house, which meant that he belonged to the oikodespotai of the city. Still more interesting was his continued prominence in the affairs of Adrianople after it had returned to the Cantacuzene allegiance.<sup>65</sup> Rather than being a mere labourer, Branos is much more likely to have been at the head of some popular association - protomaistor, perhaps?

These popular regimes did not last long. The Zealots finally gave way in 1350. They were an aberration in the history of the

Byzantine city. The archontes returned to power and exacted their revenge. In Thessalonica, at least, there was no restoration of social harmony. The archontes were more than ever fractious and self-seeking, scornful of the needs of the poor and resentful of the power wielded over them by imperial princes, such as Manuel Palaiologos, who established his court at Thessalonica from 1382 to 1387.<sup>66</sup>

But then, the medieval city at Byzantium was the creation of the archontes and was shaped to serve their interests and meet their needs. To the twelfth century and perhaps into the thirteenth the self-interest of the archontes provided the basis for economic growth, but of a limited kind. The logical conclusion was reached at Mistra - a charming place, but little more than an aristocratic refuge, from which the despot of the Morea and his court surveyed in relative safety the chaos all around. In economic terms it was a backwater, with some manufacture of silk in the hands of a small Jewish community, which was relegated to a suburb. For the luxury goods that court life demanded the aristocracy of Mistra were heavily dependent on Italian imports. It may be that the economic failure of the Byzantine city has much more to do with the Italian domination of Byzantine markets from the turn of the twelfth century and that the role of the archontes was by comparison negligible. The suspicion remains that the archontes were content with the economic conditions that existed in the twelfth century. Further economic growth might have been for the common good, but not necessarily to their advantage. In the end, the private interests of the archontes out across any sense of community or common purpose. As the Byzantine saying, collected by Eustathios of Thessalonica, had it: "Even the most miserable of the archontes will bully the people under him2."<sup>67</sup>

NOTES

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# APPENDIX

Michael Angold

## Inventory of the so-called Palace of Botaneiates,<sup>1</sup>

in the neighbourhood of Kalybia - May 1192

- I The holy church of God stands on a terrace, (with a single apse). It has a dome resting on walls and four columns - one of Bithynian marble. Between the floor of the chancel and the frieze the walls are clad in marbles of various colours right up to the entablature or cornice. Those from the centre of the church westwards are encrusted with Nicomedian tiles. Above the aforementioned cornice and up into the dome itself is decorated with gold and coloured mosaic; with two railings and one clustered pillar, two grilles, and latticed openings and windows. The floor is of green stone, with a centrepiece of three circles, a dazzling opus sectile surround with a pattern of coloured roundels, with a border of white marble and Lydian stone. Above near the middle of the west railing there is an image of Christ in marble. The partition of the chancel consists of four posts of green marble, two perforated grilles, and an interlace of holy effigies carved out of heavy wooden boards, with a marble entablature above. In front of the apse recess, gilded on two sides, there lies the chancel, paved in green in the shape of a cross. The holy altar is of marble, supported on one slender column. Above is a ciborium resting on four slender columns and four vaults. To the north of the chancel there is an arch and a single conch, decorated with hangings, but with no paved floor. It is carried by walls, one column and vaults and two railings; with latticed doors and windows. There is an altar with four wooden columns; the walls and chancel are simply decorated, the chancel alone is paved in white marble without a border. To the south of the main chancel there is another arch and a single conch, decorated with hangings, its chancel is screened off with two slender columns of Bathys marble and two columns of Sangarian marble; with four low panelled railings and a marble entablature. There is an altar supported by a single short column. It is paved in white marble with opus sectile and coloured roundels. In it there are three rails, two with double openings; the third is closed, having depicted upon it a portrait of the Mother of God. In it is also a candlestick - circular in shape and made of bronze - with two branches, eight holders, and the base of the lamp, and, above, an alabaster vault. Its chancel is decorated with

gold and coloured mosaic. To the south of it there is a canopy supported by three slender columns, with one panel and five mouldings. The floor is of white and red marble. There is a marble railing above the canopy, but hanging from it is the wooden bar, which is struck for services [i.e. a semandron].

- II To the west of the church - a double arch resting on walls and columns; with eight rails and one slender column. The floor - not of marble - is screened off to the north with four walls and to the west with ten stone slabs and one rail.
- III To the north of this and to the west of the arch on the northern side of the church - a terrace formed by four canopies and one chamber.
- IV To the north of this chamber - a terrace under a canopy supported by seven slender columns and two other slender columns, facing in the direction of the northern arch; with one rail, two lattices, and a fence made of a few planks of wood. All except the canopy paved - the terrace in white marble, the borders in the shape of a cross done in assorted reds. Some marble oddments, one of Bithynian marble: all in a very bad state of repair.
- V To the west of this terrace and the arch - a circular Oaton - with the dais cracked - supported by walls, four slender columns, and five reed-like columns; enclosed by one rail, three walls, four cornices, and three railings with latticed gates and four lattices. There are preserved on the floor marbles from a templon - in a bad state of repair, as are the borders of Bithynian marble.
- VI To the west of this - a semi-circular structure beneath four slender columns - one superfluous<sup>2</sup> - and closed off by a wooden fence. The floor of carved marble is in a bad state of repair.
- VII To the west of the arch on the south side of the church - a small [pavilion, known as a] karykoxylon, resting on walls, two slender columns, a rail, one large clustered pillar and another towards the north - one of the slender columns superfluous; a floor of opus plumarium<sup>3</sup> in red and white marble.
- VIII From here towards the south west of the arch - two more chambers - square in shape - covered by an overhanging roof, which is supported towards the middle by walls and eight columns - two of Bathys marble; enclosed by eight rails, three cornices, two walls, four railings with latticed openings and one lattice. The floor of white marble with incised roundels of red marble and other colours - some missing.
- IX To the south of this - a great hall - with a floor not of marble - resting on walls and two large columns and shut off

by six marble rails, one clustered pillar, one lattice, and alabaster slabs with window panes - in a bad state of repair.

- X To the south of this, behind the eastern part - a chamber with an overhanging roof, resting on walls and six columns. In the chamber there is a stove enclosed by walls, a wall of marble, a cornice, and two railings - not in marble.
- XI To the west of this and to the south of the western part of the hall - a pavilion, known as a karykoxylon, with two tie-beams, resting on walls and two columns, with one marble rail and a floor of opus plumarium.
- XII To the east of this and towards the south of the chamber with the pitched roof, where there is a stove, there are two chambers under a pitched roof - in a very bad state of repair, uncovered, and with the floor missing - supported by walls and six columns from the ground up. There are two marbled latticed openings, covered by iron shutters, with a pattern resembling eleven rods and eighteen circles. There are, in addition, substructures towards the south.
- XIII To the east of the great hall and to the south of these buildings - a terrace, uncovered except for the ceiling over the wooden stairway, which is carried on two slender columns and paved with red and white marble.
- XIV From this leads a single stairway, supported by a substructure of bricks and mortar.
- XV To the south of this - a building of four bays resting on walls and one slender column. Included in this to the south - a chamber supported by walls and one marble rail.
- XVI To the east of this and above the gateway - an arch with a small canopy in the direction of the courtyard - no dais - resting on one slender column. Opus sectile floor with red pieces - in a poor state of repair.
- XVII Below are rooms and the basement of the palace church, which are strengthened with walls and white columns and one of speckled marble.
- XVIII The lower floor towards the south of the arch serves as a gatehouse, the gate being in the form of one marble rail with two painted doors and a small gate with both lock and bolts. Inside there are two slender columns which support from below the floor of the canopy - with no platform - which faces towards the courtyard of the terrace.
- XIX To the east of this gateway and to the south of the upper courtyard - seven two-storeyed dwellings, covered with a chamber around the middle and by two halls, with a terrace in the shape of an arch, overlooking the courtyard; and with pitched roofs.

- XX To the south of a second terrace formed by the pitched roofs - the entrance through the circuit of walls, which cut off the narrow passage, leading from the direction of Kalybia into this courtyard. Both terraces are completely rotten and are now in danger of falling in, their floors are decayed, paved in part with bits of broken marble, the pattern having been lost. They are supported from the ground up on walls and wooden columns and by the four slender columns of the terrace facing the courtyard.
- XXI In front of these lies the upper courtyard, which is closed off to the east by a free-standing wall; to the south by the buildings just described; to the north, beyond the bounds of the property, by a retaining wall of masonry; to the west by the church and the great hall. In this courtyard there are two marble caps, one for a cistern and the other for a storage pit.
- XXII To the north of this courtyard - a terrace with overhanging roof and exposed floor, lying close and adjacent to the retaining wall, next to the free and venerable nunnery of the Most Holy Mother of God tou Mandylion, which is situated to the east. The whole dwelling which faces onto the courtyard ought to form a part of it.
- XXIII There is another courtyard, which is to the north of the buildings which have been described, along with those to the east of the palace.
- XXIV It contains a two-storeyed hall, divided into two floors: the upper which serves as a granary and the lower which serves as a stable with stalls to the centre and a double manger. There is a terrace overlooking the courtyard. It is covered by an overhanging roof on the north and by a lean-to roof. The stairway has a roof overhanging on one side.
- XXV To the north of this courtyard - eight two-storeyed dwellings in the form of two chambers and a hall, with a terrace towards the courtyard, and on the outside in the shape of shacks and lean-tos, all completely decayed. The basement of one of them serves as an entrance, consisting of a marble rail, a small gate with lock and key, and, inside, of two openings of eight cubits. They are held up by walls and wooden columns.
- XXVI To the west of this courtyard - another dwelling of two stories in the shape of a hall, having two areas: an upper floor, which serves as a granary; a lower floor, which serves as a stable, but without stalls or mangers.
- XXVII Towards the south of the courtyard - a basement not divided off by vaults, under the terrace with the canopy and the entresol of the Oaton.

- XXVIII To the west of the buildings on either side of the great hall, which have already been described, and of the great hall itself - a great dwelling-house, covered by a large dining hall. It rests on walls and two columns. It is not closed off and without a floor. In it there lies a great marble cornice.
- XXIX To the south of this - a narrow uncovered way.
- XXX From here towards the west - a karykoxylon built of bricks and mortar, with a roof overhanging on one side, enclosed by walls of mud-brick and mortar, which terminate to the west with the monastery of St Demetrios. In it - a deep well with a marble cap and another plain opening.
- XXXI Included towards the north of this and to the west of the great lower hall there is a lower floor, supported from the ground up by masonry walls and six columns with another five columns higher up. Above it are the middle floors and the upper terraces, which are covered by an arch and canopies, but there are many holes and the floor is missing. The basement of this lower hall and its nethermost spaces serve as a cistern.
- XXXII Towards the west of these middle floors - a church standing on a terrace, covered on two sides, resting on walls and two columns, containing three railings, two lattices, four superfluous columns, four railings, a chancel, an altar and a floor of white marble pieces.
- XXXIII There is a forecourt covered with a pavement, not of marble, which is decaying; an entrance with two gates and a marble rail and one column; a raised dais with a canopy, the surround being decorated with gold and coloured mosaic.
- XXXIV To the west of this - a small terrace in the shape of an arch, formed by walls and four columns and four wooden rails with decaying openings; the floor of ordinary stone and the pattern fading.
- XXXV From this there leads a decaying wooden staircase, supported all the way to the ground by steps of stone and marble.
- XXXVI To the west of these and of the courtyard - a bath-house built of bricks and mortar, with a single structure of marble slabs, with two slender columns and mosaic pictures.
- XXXVII The lower floor of the church is shut off and closed up with doors.

- XXXVIII In this courtyard there is a well with a cap and three storage pits.
- XXXIX To the west of this courtyard - another courtyard, which lies above the cistern of the Antiphonetes.
- XL To the north of this courtyard there are rooms, their interiors destroyed by the accident of fire; there only survive eleven walls of masonry.
- XLI Towards the south - dwellings belonging to the monastery of St Demetrios, at least ten in all, covered by an overhanging roof on one side, enclosed and shut off by rails. They are occupied by various lessees who pay one nomisma for each. Their distance from the wall of St Demetrios to the north is five cubits.
- XLII To its west - eight more dwellings in the shape of a hall, resting on walls, enclosed and shut off with doors. They are about five and half cubits in width. To the south west there is a shingle gate, with wooden doors of eight cubits.
- XLIII In this courtyard there is an aperture in the vault of the cistern, but no well-curb. The dwellings which have been burnt down ought to be rebuilt as they were. Those living in this courtyard ought to be provided with water, because they rely on the cistern of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Antiphonetes not only for watering their beasts, but also for their own drinking water - and only for drinking, for there is no water for a bathhouse.

Inventory of the so-called Palace of Botaneiates,  
in the neighbourhood of Kalybia - 13 October 1202<sup>4</sup>

- 1 The holy church is domed with a single apse and four columns - one of Bithynian marble. The frieze and the curve of the apse are clad in marble, along with the vaults. The L-shaped spaces to the west are encrusted with Nicomedian tiles, along with the cornice. Above there are images in gold and coloured mosaic, as with the dome and the four vaults - three with windows. The partition of the sanctuary consists of four posts of green marble with bronze collars, two perforated railings, a marble entablature, and a gilded wooden templon. Over the altar with its four straight sides there is a ciborium resting on four slender columns and screened off by two rails, two railings with latticed doors and windows. Above the west rail is a carved marble icon. The floor consists of an interlace of green slabs and opus sectile and a border of Phlegmonousian marble. To the south there is an extension in the shape of an arch, decorated with images, with a conch decorated with mosaic. Its partition consists of three slender columns, [panelling, known as] a harmosphenion, and a marble

entablature. The two entrances have marble rails and the other is closed. The floor is of white marble with opus sectile and roundels. The outer semi-circular terrace, which is decayed, has two reed-like columns and a marble floor. To the north there is an extension in the shape of an arch, decorated with images, a conch, which is not shut off and a floor of plain marble. The partition towards the west consists of columns and two railings with latticed doors and two reed-like columns, a rail, two lattices, and the window panes missing in the clerestory.

- 2 To the west of the church an arch in the shape of a conch - decaying - carried by walls and two columns with vaults; and a second [arch] outside. In the passage way to the south - a marble rail; and to the north - two entablatures.
- 3 To the north of this a chamber with two slender columns and a floor of interlacing white marble.
- 4 Outside this - a semi-circular structure, old and decayed, with a partition made of palings and the floorboards missing.
- 5 To the west of these a [pavilion, known as] a karykoxylon - in a state of decay - fenced off with palings, paved with flagstones.
- 6 To the west and directly in line with these - a floor, open to the sky - completely decayed. On it are five columns, one slender column, and a rail.
- 7 Leading off from this an Oaton - unenclosed; split in two and in danger of collapse. It has three slender columns, seven reed-like columns, lattice work, and three cornices.
- 8 To the south west of the said floor - a chamber and a privy with two columns, a railing, and a marble rail. The floor of the chamber is of white marble.
- 9 To the east - a two-storeyed building with a pitched roof, with two railings and two columns; the floor of opus sectile and with five roundels. On it - a rail.
- 10 To the east of this - a chamber with four columns, a rail, cornice, and palings. The floor of marble and opus sectile - in a state of decay.
- 11 To the south of these - a dining hall with a wooden floor, seven screens, and two columns.
- 12 To the east of these - an open terrace, paved with real tiles - missing - and a few white ones.
- 13 Leading off to the north a chamber paved in proper white marble, but with the opus sectile missing.

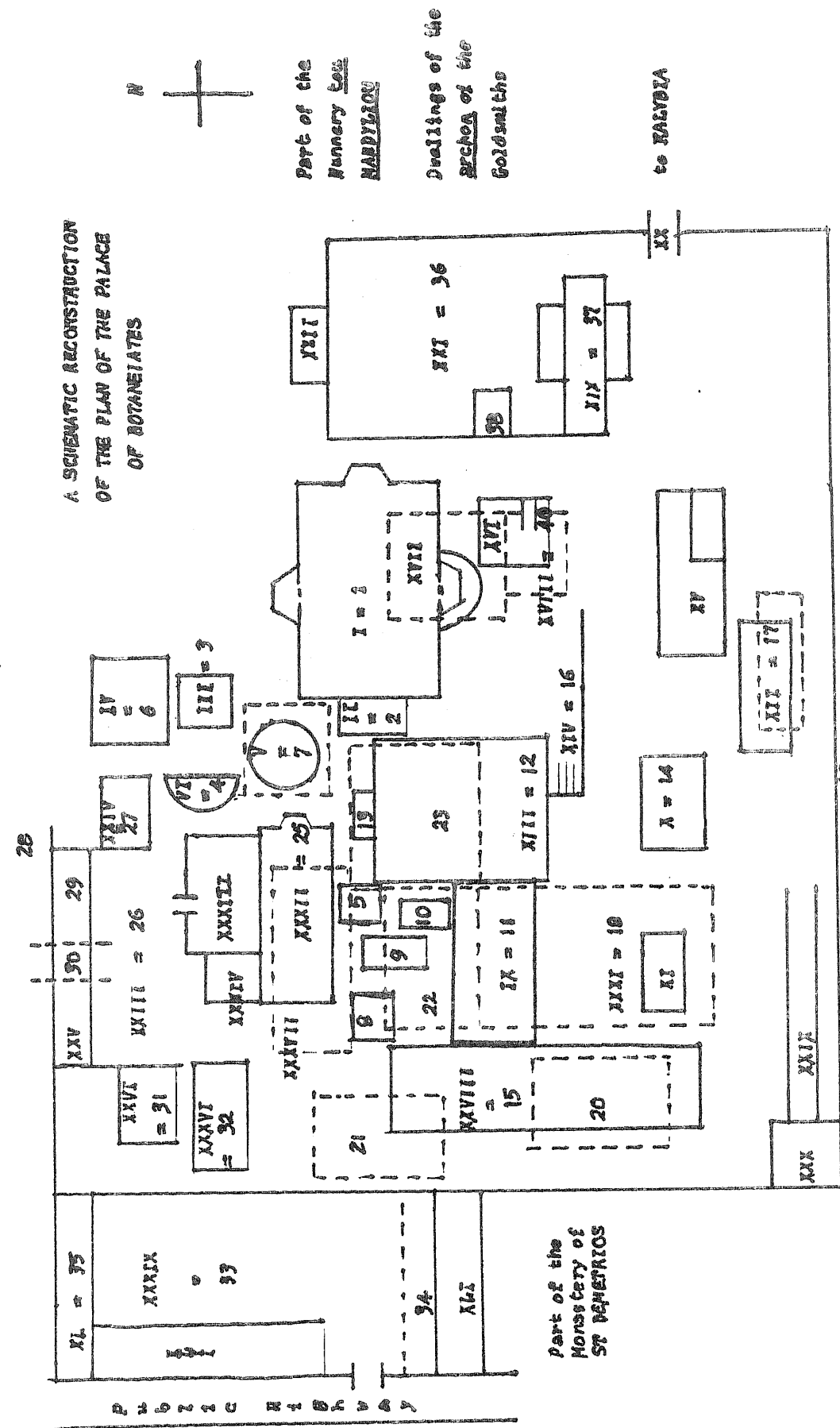
- 14 On the eastern side of the dining hall - a chamber and a lean-to with six columns and two railings, the floors either decaying or missing.
- 15 To the west of these - a dining hall, half floored in opus sectile - in a state of decay. In it are two columns and a screen.
- 16 To the south of the open terrace - vaults carried on columns.
- 17 To the south east of the buildings to the side of the dining hall - two buildings with their substructures; with six columns.
- 18 To the west of the aforementioned, the substructures of the great dining hall, which is without a roof. In them - a cistern and two columns of omphaites.
- 19 To the south of these - a boundary wall.
- 20 To the west - a vaulted lower floor, above which is the dining hall.
- 21 To the north of this - substructures dividing off the monastery of St Demetrios, containing four columns and two screens.
- 22 To the north of this great dining hall - substructures, overhanging which are the very tall karykoxylon - in a state of decay - and part of the arch with seven columns.
- 23 Outside these to the north - the substructures of the terrace.
- 24 To the north of these the entresol and the lower floor of the Oaton, to the west of which is a floor with a slender column.
- 25 To the north west of these - the substructures of the ruined church with an apse decorated in mosaic with figures of four monks. There are four columns, a chancel, two railings, and another two which form part of the lattice-work partition, with two lattices, a screen, and five columns.
- 26 To the north of what has been described - a courtyard.
- 27 To the east of this - an upper room belonging to the granary - in a bad state of repair.
- 28 To the north - a partition in the shape of a wall.
- 29 Leading from this upper rooms - in a state of total disrepair.



- 30 Below these - the entrance: double doors with marble railings.
- 31 To the west of these - the hall of the other granary with a terrace facing towards the courtyard, in which there is a well, a marble well-curb, and a trough.
- 32 To the west of the courtyard - the vaulted substructures of the hypocaust, the calidarium, and the tepidarium, above which are the substructures (with two columns) of the lower floor, which serves as a matrogikion,<sup>6</sup> that is, where the couches of the bathers are spread out.
- 33 To the west of these - a courtyard above the cistern of our Lord Jesus Christ Antiphonetes.
- 34 On its southern side - close to the wall of the dwelling houses of the monastery of St Demetrius - nine basements extending to the entrance to the public highway, bringing in a rent of nine hyperpyra.
- 35 On its northern side and slightly to the west - nine dwellings in the shape of halls, the rent being ten nomismata.
- 36 To the east of the section detailed above - the forecourt of the palace.
- 37 To its south - a hall extending as far as the decaying and untiled chamber and, to the east, as far as another roof, which has fallen to the ground. It is shut off on the east by a wall that divides off the dwellings of the megalodoxotatos archon of the goldsmiths.
- 38 In the middle of this - a low dry-stone wall with, to the west, a balcony, which looks towards the monastery of tou Mandyliou.
- 39 In it - a well and the mouth of a cistern.
- 40 From it leads the entrance with its double doors in the base of the terrace of the church, with a marble rail and three columns.
- 41 There are another two in the terrace of the hall to the south.

# NOTES

1. This text is to be found in F. Miklosich and J. Muller, Acta et Diplomata Graeca medii aevi, III (Vienna, 1865), pp.x-xv; G. Bertolotto, "Nuova serie di documenti sulle relazioni di Genova col impero bizantino", in Atti della Società Ligure di Storia patria, 28(1898), App., pp.100-107; Codice diplomatico della Repubblica di Genova, III (Fonti per la storia d'Italia, 89) (Rome, 1942), pp.68-73. The original Greek text has not survived, but there are two Latin translations.
2. The word used is 'ociosus'. I have translated it literally, having received no help from any dictionary of medieval Latin.
3. Literally feather work. It was more usual to use it for brocades and carpets.
4. The original Greek text was published by F. Miklosich and J. Muller, op.cit., pp.55-57. There are in addition two Latin translations, published by G. Bertolotto, art. cit., pp.150-53, 159-60. Professor C. Mango has translated the description of the church in his The Art of the Byzantine Empire (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), pp.239-40. For this section of the text I have followed his translation quite closely, but have made some changes, which seem to be justified either by the earlier description of the church or by the Latin translations. For the translation of the whole of the text I have received valuable help from Paul Magdalino of the University of St Andrew's.
5. Presumably some kind of marble.
6. This is a gloss on matrogikion added by the second Latin translation (Bertolotto, art. cit., p.161, ll.13-14). I have not been able to find this term in any dictionary.



# A Note to the Plan

The aim of the plan is to relate the different buildings given in the inventories to one another. Since the directions given are of the skimpiest, there is plenty of room for error. No attempt is made to provide a realistic plan. It seems highly unlikely, for instance, that the boundary wall should have followed such neat, straight lines. Because the two inventories describe the palace in different ways, they do provide some kind of check on each other, which makes the localization of the various buildings that much more accurate than would have been the case, if only one inventory had survived.

The palace of Botaneiates stood nearly half way up the slope leading from the Golden Horn to the Forum of Constantine. The public highway mentioned may be the embolos which joined the Forum to the shores of the Golden Horn. The site of the palace sloped quite sharply from north to south. By the use of substructures in the south eastern quarter of the palace the chief buildings and terraces would have been brought to approximately the same level. It is usually assumed that this palace lay on the site of the Ottoman ministry of police, where a number of substructures, including a massive cistern, were discovered.<sup>1</sup>

The palace originally belonged to the Botaneiates family, but it passed in the twelfth century into the hands of the Kalamanos family. The founder of this family was a Hungarian prince, who sought refuge at the court of John II Comnenus (1118-1143). His son Constantine Doukas Kalamanos was one of Manuel Comnenus's bravest commanders.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter the fortunes of the family waned. Their palace was in a state of disrepair when it was first handed over to the Genoese in 1192. It is to be presumed that the family had either died out or had otherwise lost possession of their palace - hardly unexpected given Andronikos I Comnenus's savage attack upon the aristocracy. The neglect and decay of the palace was hastened by quartering German mercenaries in it.

The two inventories provide far and away the most detailed description of an aristocratic palace at the time of the Comneni. It bears out the statements of historians and polemicists about the luxury of such establishments. Even in a state of decay the list of floors, furnishings, and architectural features, is extremely impressive. The description of the bathhouse (XXXVI=32) shows that the Byzantines preserved some of the divisions of the Roman bath. It seems to have been on a surprisingly grand scale. The two churches within the palace fully deserve Odo of Deuil's envious description of the aristocratic chapels he saw when he visited Constantinople in 1147:<sup>3</sup> "All the wealthy people have their own chapels, so adorned with paintings, marble, and lamps that each of them might justly say, 'O Lord, I have cherished the beauty of Thy house', if the lamp of the true faith shone therein".

The organization of the palace is simpler and more coherent than a first glance at the details of the inventories suggests. The main elements are the two churches overlooking courtyards (XXI=36; XXIII=26), which provided the two main entrances (I=1; XXXII=25) into the palace. Inside there was a central (XVIII=40; XXV=30) terrace (XIII=12) around which were arranged the churches and the main

hall (IX=11). The spaces in between and down below were filled with a profusion of small chambers, pavilions, terraces, basements, and other substructures.

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1. See R. Janin, Constantinople byzantine, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1964), pp.251, 326.
  2. See D.I. Polemis, The Doukai (London, 1968), pp.123-4.
  3. Odo of Deuil, De profectione Ludovici VII in Orientem, ed. V.G. Berry (New York, 1948), p.55.